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## ABSTRACT

The relationship between literacy and "people's power" within the context of Mozambique's project of socialist reconstruction was explored through an ethnographic analysis of literacy education practices at the Matola Industrial Company, which is considered one of many embodiments of Mozambique's colonial past. First, the role of the colonial schooling system as an instrument to create failure rather than success in schooling and thus regulate flows of cheap labor was examined along with the relationship between literacy, the popular state, and people's power and the spontaneous movement of self-education in Mozambique. Next, qualitative methods were used to examine the following: the fundamental tensions between time for schooling and time for production in the workplace-based literacy program at the Matola Industrial Company; the role of literacy centers as "spaces" for social communication; the interlocking hierarchies organized through class, race/ethnicity, and gender that affect literacy students' and teachers' lives; and experiences of literacy as indicators of fundamental problems in the broader process of socialist construction and the movement for renewal within state-sponsored literacy programs. (Contains 18 tables/figures and 181 references. Appended are the survey instrument and two discussion documents examining problematic areas in ABE in the Matola Industrial Company.) (MN)

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# LITERACY, STATE FORMATION and PEOPLE'S POWER

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Judith Marshall

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*To the women and men in Mozambique  
whose lives, struggles and dreams I shared –  
working to build people's power  
and dismantle apartheid.*

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ADULT AND NONFORMAL EDUCATION THESIS SERIES

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***LITERACY,  
STATE FORMATION AND  
PEOPLE'S POWER***

**Education in a Mozambican factory**

**JUDITH MARSHALL**

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Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE)  
University of the Western Cape

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## FOREWORD TO THE SERIES

In its mission statement *UWC Objectives*, accepted by the Senate and Council in 1982, the University of the Western Cape defined its socio-political location and committed itself to a range of educational activities congruent with that location. The University recognises the structured nature of social, political and economic advantage and disadvantage in South African society, rejects the politico-ideological grounds on which it was established as an institution to serve those structures of inequality, and locates itself as an educational agency serving the forces of social change and transformation. One of the activities to which the institution committed itself in its mission statement is that of continuing education.

The Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) therefore represents a central educational concern of the University of the Western Cape. Established in April 1985, the Centre has contributed to a broadening of our understanding of the role of a university in society: the Centre does not function merely as an adjunct to the 'core activities' of the University, but has influenced the central educational debate in the institution. The University attempts to take seriously its relationship with the 'community' and the manner in which that relationship influences teaching, learning and research in the University. Our understanding of concepts like 'democracy' and 'accountability', which are such key ones in the on-going institutional debate, must be informed by the institution's understanding of the relationship with the 'community'. And CACE has been a primary agency for bringing that debate into focus.

CACE's *Adult and Nonformal Education Thesis Series* is a further significant contribution in this regard. While the University explores new modes of educational activity, it is the content and quality of theory it generates that will be decisive in ultimately evaluating our contribution. This publication series sets out to contribute to the theoretical debate over nonformal education.

G J Gerwel  
Rector and Vice-Chancellor  
University of the Western Cape



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This work was originally presented as a Ph.D thesis to the University of Toronto, in 1988.

This study of the relations between literacy, people's power and state formation in Mozambique emerges from an association with the Frelimo Party and the struggle of the Mozambican people over the past two decades. The contrast between the hope and promise of Mozambique during my first visit as Oxfam-Canada representative just after independence in 1976 and the devastation today, as the apartheid regime orchestrates a slow destruction extending to every rural district, every point of economic infrastructure, every basic service, is hard to capture in words.

I would be the last to argue that the external factors are the definitive ones. Nonetheless, at many points during the study, as I focussed on the way internal social relations created or denied a space for people's power, I felt the need for a more adequate device to signal constantly the impact of this all-pervasive war. Certainly during the 1978-84 period when I lived in Mozambique and during the research carried out in 1985 and 1986 for this study, I was intensely aware of how much the systematic destructive power of the apartheid regime on Mozambique's doorstep defined the parameters of the possible in constructing socialism. Not surprising that Graca Machel, the Minister of Education, could say during the 10th Anniversary celebrations in 1985 that the main thing to celebrate was Mozambique's survival – as a republic, and as a people's republic.

I am indebted to a great many people for making this study possible. The Mozambican friends and colleagues who contributed to the study are far too many to name individually, but will recognize themes of our endless discussions woven throughout the chapters. Many of these discussions about what literacy was and could be came together in the Manga project. The revitalization of literacy emerging from that project, and its very critical assessment of how literacy had come to be done, gave me encouragement not to in any way soften the negative aspects encountered in the CIM literacy center where I did my research. To the Ministry of Education and to the CIM staff and workers who facilitated that research, I owe a debt of enormous gratitude. Particular thanks go to the CIM literacy students and teachers themselves, the Director of Human Resources and Economy, Abdul Carimo, and the staff of the Training Department, Samuel Zita, Aurelio Tembe and Lopes Chigoiane.

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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction

When we consider the first use to which writing was put, it would seem quite clear that it was first and foremost connected with power; it was used for inventories, catalogues, censuses and instructions; in all instances, whether the aim was to keep a check on material possessions or human beings, it was the evidence of the power exercised by some men over other men and over worldly possessions.

*Conversations with Levi-Strauss* Quoted in Carbonnier:1969

Houses are houses and the more of them the better; but education is never just education – it is the assimilation of a social order.

Quentin Hoare (Quoted in Hoyles 1977:35)

... socialist construction gives the working masses their heads; whereas capitalism uses ideally headless pure labour power. . . . Socialist construction, by giving the masses their heads immediately unleashes an enormous productive force; the collective skills and energies of workers and peasants are the major productive forces of socialist construction. What socialist construction should also make possible is the actualisation of the dreams . . . , the aspirations and hopes of the masses. These too are real resources for socialism. Not machines, not money, not technology, not cadres, and not, perhaps above all not, state bureaucrats, but the working masses . . . are the people who make socialist construction.

(Corrigan and Sayer 1984:48)

With literacy, people don't earn more – but everything they know is in their heads. They can go anywhere, do anything, ask for what they want, enter in. When people don't know reading and writing, they are afraid.

(Interview with Cristina Mavale<sup>1</sup>,

Maputo factory worker, January 1986

This study is about the experiences of literacy of a group of women and men in a workplace adult education center. This center is located in a factory in Mozambique, a country in which a ten year armed struggle was waged against Portuguese colonialism, led by the Mozambique Liberation Front, FRELIMO, which won state power in 1975<sup>2</sup>. The study was carried out in 1985/6, ten years into a process of socialist construction aimed at creating "people's power". It is important from the outset to examine with some care the three central concepts referred to above, "literacy", "state" and "people's power". No one of these terms can be used unproblematically. Each takes us into much contested terrain, and it therefore becomes important to indicate how I will be using them in this study.

### *Literacy – speaking lives, reading the world and writing history*

"Literacy", whether in scholarly texts, policy documents or as "common sense" knowledge, tends to be taken as an unqualified good, a mark of individual advancement and broader social progress. There are common day-to-day assumptions at work about what it means to be literate – employable, integrated into society, able to cope with work and family, having access to books and therefore knowledge. There are equally strong assumptions at work about the "pathology" of being illiterate – marginality, isolation, deprivation, being a ward of society. Unemployment and technological redundancy are laid at the feet of illiteracy. Literacy is signalled as the key to stable family life, competent consumption and informed political action as measured by the electoral process. Literacy rates are also taken to be key measuring instruments for determining a Third World nation's progress in "development".

Built into this conceptualization of literacy is a positivist vision of human evolution, unfolding through the centuries, catching up backward nations into an inexorable process of "modernization". There is a "developmentalist" logic built in, an implicit assumption that the growth of mass literacy that took place in the northern hemisphere will now inexorably reach the mainly southern countries making up the Third World. This concept of literacy has also tended to be adopted uncritically by Third World leaders over the past several decades. Third World policy makers, whatever path for development they have espoused, have placed an exaggerated amount of faith in the power of mass literacy. They have seen in literacy the promise of an end to backwardness and marginalization, a pathway to modernity and socio-economic development.

A more critical investigation of the path of mass literacy in western social development, while it in no way denies the liberating power of literacy, shows literacy also to have been a major force for broader processes of social control in the emerging capitalist nation state. Mass literacy, the imposition of a language, a way of speaking it, a privileging of certain kinds of experience into knowledge, a regulation of schools texts, certification for mastery of those texts and not others – all these have been integral to new ways of containment and subordination. Behind the social construction of literacy which posits literacy as an unqualified good, and the more of it the better, lies a history of state sponsored public schooling that has more to do with large-scale projects of moral regulation and social integration and control than with individual or collective liberation.

Tracing the path in European and later North American social development from the oral culture of the medieval era to the restricted literacy of the early modern era to the mass literacy that emerged from about 1930 onwards, one finds a gradual, uneven, and at times contradictory process. The shift from oral to literate modes took place over a lengthy period during which the two modes interpenetrated so deeply that any idea of one flourishing without the other was unthinkable. They were also interconnected as differentiation. Twelfth century charters were addressed to “all those seeing and hearing these letters and often ended with good-bye”. By the thirteenth century they were already more impersonally cast with such phrases as “Let all persons present and future know”. A similar change took place with regard to wills which, until the thirteenth century, had been basically oral acts, even when recorded, depending on spoken wishes heard by witnesses. By the end of the thirteenth century, the validity of the will depended on its being in the correct documentary form and not on verbal assurances of witnesses. Thus the shift from memory to written records proceeded gradually. (Clanchy:1975)

If in the middle ages in Europe, there was a period when the power of the oral and the written were intermingled so that the binding power of texts and signatures was doubly guaranteed by the reverence shown to the physical form of the text, this could also be found in early missionary accounts of their activities.

Studies of the first contacts between missionaries and Africans in southern Africa by Jean Comaroff point to this appropriation of the power of the word through actions involving the actual texts.

Like the power to transform the world through ritual, literacy seems to have been understood less as an acquired skill than an internal mystical power: the treatment of the body with the written word and newsprint

was later to become a regular part of Tswana healing, especially among the illiterate poor.

(Comaroff 1985:203)

There are innumerable problems in giving precise accounts of literacy in the middle ages, as Michael Clanchy's very illuminating work makes clear. One is that the very accounts of the period use the terms of "litteratus-il-literatus" and "clericus-laicus" in very particular ways. These cannot be translated into their modern equivalents as a basis for determining whether various groupings of persons listed as "clericus" or knights listed as "litteratus" were literate in the twentieth century sense of that word. (Clanchy:1979)

Another difficulty is that of problematizing the assumptions about the coupling of reading and writing, and about a close association between literacy and spoken languages. Writing was a skill quite distinct from reading and reading was more often linked with speaking aloud than with cycling script. The variety of written and spoken languages added their own complexities.

The variety also obstructed the rapid spread of literacy, in the modern sense of the majority of people acquiring a minimal capacity to read and write the language they spoke. Elementary instruction in reading and writing started in Latin because that was the traditional language of literacy and sacred Scripture. Those who wrote in vernaculars, whether in Middle English or French, were building novel and complex structures on a foundation of Latin. Neither Middle English nor French was sufficiently standardized . . . to become the basis of elementary instruction in reading and writing until well after 1380. If a person in Edward I's reign had learned to read in English or French but not in Latin, he could never become litteratus nor could he have understood the majority of writings circulating in his own life-time because these were in Latin. English and French had to have become common business and literary languages before it was practical or desirable to initiate literate skills with them.

(Clanchy: 1979: 22,23)

The powerful institutions of the church and the legal professions had tended to maintain literacy as their preserve during the middle ages. During the mercantile era that preceded the emergence of capitalism, literacy was already a vital tool for merchants and navigators. (Hoyles 1977:17)

The invention of the printing press at the end of the fifteenth century clearly brought about dramatic changes. The pioneering work of Elizabeth

Eisenstein in *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Eisenstein:1979) begins to document the unacknowledged revolution in communications and the relationships between the communications shift and other developments associated with the transition from medieval to early modern times. While Eisenstein admits readily to printing's role in spurring the spread of literacy, her main project is to trace not the shift from oral to literate culture, but from one kind of literate culture to another. The transition from scribal culture to print culture created a literate environment of a totally different nature. In her thought-provoking article conjecturing on the impact of printing on western society and thought (in Graff:1981), she singles out four major areas: dissemination, standardization, editing and preservation. First, the mere fact of dissemination and access provided by printed texts ended the traditions of wandering scholars travelling to consult texts or commentators spending a life-time on single texts. Suddenly texts were available. The first century of printing was characterized by intellectual ferment as new combinations of old ideas suddenly made accessible resulted in entirely new systems of thought.

The impact of standardization was profound. Textually mediated representations of experience were available for the first time. Some of the most important were the pictorial statements – maps, charts, diagrams, the uniform reference guides such as calendars, thesauruses, dictionaries, the regular systems of notation – grammatical, mathematical, musical. All of these prefigured major developments in science and bureaucracy, whole ways of viewing day-to-day experience and mediating that experience through texts.

Similarly, the printing conventions having to do with editing and reorganizing texts led to procedures of codifying, clarifying, cataloguing. Built-in aids to the reader appeared – title pages, graduated type, running heads, footnotes, tables of contents – all of which gave new access and new ways of viewing reality. From this came rational systems, new ways of bureaucratic organization, ranging from law books offering legal precedents and the beginnings of a codified legal system to new views of history, science and literature.

The very fact of preservation had radical implications for patterns of cultural and institutional change. The energies devoted by scribal culture to seeking out and re-copying documents gave way to fixed bodies of literature widely disseminated, a textually mediated sense of self and world beginning to emerge, the beginning of the modern knowledge industry. All of this had huge ramifications for state formation.

Studies of dynastic consolidation and/or of nationalism might well devote more space to the advent of printing. Typography arrested linguistics



tic drift, enriched as well as standardized vernaculars, and paved the way for the more deliberate purification and codification of all European languages. Randomly patterned, sixteenth-century type-casting largely determined the subsequent elaboration of national mythologies on the part of certain separate groups with multilingual dynastic states. The duplication of vernacular primers and translations contributed in other ways to nationalism. A mother's tongue learned naturally at home would be reinforced by inculcation of a homogenized print-made language mastered while still young when learning to read. During the most impressionable years of childhood, the eye would first see a more standardized version of what the ear heard. Particularly after grammar schools gave primary instruction on reading by using vernacular instead of Latin readers, linguistic roots and rootedness in one's homeland would be entangled.

(Eisenstein 1968:61/62)

Mass literacy proceeded, then, through a slow process of putting down roots, a trajectory not to be confused with the history of schooling, for in fact the two did not proceed at the same rate nor were they subject to the same gravitational pulls. Of these, there were many – Protestantism and the rise of capitalism being two fundamental ones. The restricted literacy of the middle ages religion in which the clergy were sole depositors and interpreters and preached to the ignorant masses gave way to Protestantism. This meant not only mass access to the book but differing interpretations of it – and a whole new age was entered.

In some countries state and church combined to regulate literacy. In Sweden, for example, literacy and religion were integrally linked with successful certification in literacy necessary by the local priest as a prerequisite for marriage. Nor was this evangelical zeal nationally bounded. The Protestant missionary societies that formed in the nineteenth century took their preoccupation with individual, direct access to scripture to the far corners of the earth, and encouraged a vast enterprise of codifying local languages and providing translations of scripture into multiple tongues.

The great religions of the Book, Protestantism, soon to be joined by the Counter Reformation, could probably have made do with a modicum of reading ability on the part of the faithful. . . . But the market economy, backed by and relying upon the machinery of the centralized state, expanded the role of writing as a necessary condition of modernization.

(Furet & Ozouf:1977 in Graff 1981:216/217)



The detailed historical investigation of literacy from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries has only begun to be reconstructed. (Graff:1978/1979, 1979, 1981, 1987b; Cipolla:1969) There are a growing number of richly detailed case studies of England (Cressy:1977; Schofield:1968, 1973; Sanderson:1972; Stone:1969), France (Judt:1979), Sweden (Johanssen:1977), the USA (Lockridge:1974) and Canada (Graff:1979).

What is clear from these studies is the multiplicity of experiences of mass literacy and the complexity of the inter-relationships between literacy and other social processes including the Protestant reformation, industrialization, urbanization, and language codification, to name but a few. Another important theme is the link between literacy and economic development. While there is a good deal of debate about ways of measuring literacy and its actual incidence (Stone:1969; Sanderson:1972; Cressy:1980), none of the detailed case studies of literacy bears out the widely held notion of a direct, causal link between literacy and economic growth, an argument held dear by the human capital school of education (Blaug:1970) and those espousing theories for Third World development based on "stages of economic growth" (Rostow:1971), "modernization" (Almond:1960; Apter:1965) and minimum literacy levels for economic take-off into sustained economic growth (Anderson and Bowman:1965).

In England in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, schools were specialized institutions for instruction in literacy skills. Few attended regularly or stayed longer than a year or two. Practical skills were learned through households and work groups as part of a broad pattern of socialization of which apprenticeship is a well-known but formalized example.

Thus insofar as economic growth in this period entailed the acquisition of a large number of practical skills by a growing proportion of the population, developments in literacy and education were probably irrelevant to it. And, insofar as economic growth resulted from the increased productivity of labor brought about by the shift from domestic to factory production, literacy and education were also probably irrelevant, for many of the new industrial occupations recruited a largely illiterate work force, so much so that many industrial communities were markedly more illiterate than their neighbours.

(Schofield 1973:213)

There is little basis historically, then, for positing universal relationships between literacy and economic growth. In fact, "for England, at least, the usual causal relationships between literacy and economic growth might profitably be reversed. . . . the reduction in illiteracy in nineteenth century

England would appear more as a cultural change brought about by economic growth than as one of the causes of growth. (Graff 1981:213)

### *Literacy as state formation*

The link between literacy and state formation is one of the most fascinating. The current debate on how to conceptualize state and state formation is particularly suggestive for new ways to think about mass literacy. Here I am not talking about the state in a way that reduces it to a reflex of whatever class holds economic power. I am drawing on recent work on theorizing the development of the capitalist state that would understand state as neither instrumental nor superstructural but as relational<sup>3</sup>.

State formation understood in this way becomes the shifting constellation of forms and institutions and practices that work together to organize a particular social order. While instruments of naked control and coercion form part of that repertoire, the more interesting state forms are perhaps those less often identified. They include the seemingly neutral sets of institutions for ordering the day to day running of society, shaping subjectivities and constructing a social and moral order through bureaucracies, legislation, the media, education systems, etc. They include the "official" accounts of events and history, the working up of re-presentations of past experience in ways that organize time and space, creating political subjects with a particular sense of identity as community or nation<sup>4</sup>.

In tracing out the development of state forms under capitalism, the questions of language, literacy and textually mediated forms of governing are fundamental. From a social world characterized by face to face contact with oral accounts of direct experience in multiple mother tongues came a movement towards forms of textually mediated experience in standardized language forms. The role of printing was central to this process of creating or breaking down a sense of "national" consciousness.

Printing preserved and codified, sometimes even created certain vernaculars. Its absence during the sixteenth century among small linguistic groups demonstrably led to the disappearance or exclusion of their vernaculars from the realm of literature. Its presence among similar groups in the same century ensured the possibility of intermittent revivals or continued expansion. Having fortified language walls between one group and another, printers homogenized what was within them, breaking down minor differences, standardizing idioms for millions of writers and readers, assigning a peripheral role to provincial dialects. The preservation of a given literary language often depended on whether or

not a few vernacular primers, catechisms or Bibles happened to get printed (under foreign as well as domestic auspices) in the sixteenth century. When this was the case, the subsequent expansion of a separate national literary culture ensued. When this did not happen, a prerequisite for budding national consciousness disappeared; a spoken provincial dialect was left instead.

(Eisenstein:1969 quoted in Graff:1981)

Furet and Ozouf make the point that it is writing that truly marks the break with orality and the power of oral tradition. A new way of relating to the social and natural world is created, through an individualized, silent, internal exercise. Oral culture was public and collective; written culture was private, and personal. Such a transformation of the dominant mode of communication modified the whole social fabric, individualizing its members.

Face to face discussions presupposes close neighbourliness, whereas the written word multiplies and standardizes information, for an intellectually individualized, geographically scattered, world. . . . What now underwrites inter-individual relations is no longer the immemorial utterances of old men, acting as guardians of local jurisprudence, but the dual authority of the market and the state, sealed in writing and embodied in contract and law.

(Furet & Ozouf. Quoted in Graff 1981:223)

Within the emergence of capitalist society and the forms of state that create a sense of identity within it, mass literacy was clearly an important dimension. This is by no means to suggest that there were not voices pressing for a continued restriction of access to literacy to an elite. The fears against extending literacy to the masses are clearly articulated. Voices raised loudly for and against literacy raged loudly, in fact, until the first third of the nineteenth century.

Many conservatives feared the acquisition of education by the masses, thinking (probably quite erroneously) that they would be unfitted for grueling manual labor, unsettled in their stations, and lacking respect for their betters. Without traditional defence, reinforced by ignorance of print and communication, the masses would become undisciplined, unwilling to labor at sub-subsistence levels and to accept their lack of power. Moreover, the dangers of protest, civil strife, and even revolution, which so many feared in that Age of Revolution, would only be heightened. Of course in many places, literacy continued to be restricted and even systematically withheld from certain segments of the population. Slaves in the United States south offer one such illustration.

This reactionary tendency, which feared schooling for the poor and working class, succumbed to the triumph of liberal progressive school promotion in the first half of the nineteenth century. Conservatives were out-argued and beaten down by sheer numbers, as well as by the facts and forces of rapid social change, the accompanying problems, and the urgent need for solutions. . . . As we can see now, the systematic and institutional provision of literacy and education for the masses formed a central element in strategies for establishing control in society. As control by traditional rank deference and the "moral economy" were replaced by emergent class divisions, education was seen as the new social cement.

(Graff 1978:2)

The centrality of mass literacy disseminated through state-sponsored schooling systems for creating social order and a social identity of citizenship is clear. Literacy seen in this way is integral to the whole process of state formation. Certainly the history of the rise of public schooling through which mass literacy became established shows clearly that literacy and increasing integration and social control have gone hand in hand, all in the context of a larger moral project.

At the point in the nineteenth century when mass education was introduced through public schooling systems, this ideological project of building a political subject was paramount in many countries of North America and Europe. As Corrigan, Curtis and Lanning point out in their article "The Political Space of Schooling":

Schooling was never intended to educate – in the sense of skilling and making more knowledgeable – more than a tiny proportion of the schooled population. The mass of the schooled population was rather to be *informed* and *transformed*. Public schooling in particular, in North America as in Europe, established itself only at the expense of well-established popular educational institutions. These "inadequate", "wretched", "miserable", "imitation", "sham" schools and the community controlled learning that went on in them were marginalized, stigmatized and destroyed by state schools. In their place states and governments sought to install "humanizing", "moralizing", and "civilizing" schools, where the "lower orders" and the "poorer sections" of the population could be elevated. Seen more generally, schooling was situated in a far more extensive project of *civilizing* which was oriented towards "education in general" rather than to schooling as we commonly understand the latter term. "Education" and "civilization" involved, in the famous phrase, catching up and regulating the "hearts and minds" of all the lower orders (children and adults, men and women) through the ensemble of *provided* institutions which constitute modern state forma-

tion. The school, the prison, the park, the playground, the settlement house, the asylum, and other institutions were conceived by the ruling class as having an "educative tendency" for the population. They were also forms of *police*.

(Corrigan, Curtis, Lanning:1987)

The extension of mass literacy in western societies, then, must be seen in the broad sweep of historical transformation that created the capitalist system. The movement from social control through monarchies, the church and ascriptive social positions gradually shifted to social control through the functions of a seemingly neutral, impersonal state. What needs to be investigated more deeply is whether and how mass literacy was essential to the exercising of power of that state, and what role literacy plays in the type of social integration established under capitalism. How did – and does – the constellation of institutions, forms and practices by which the ruling apparatus carries out functions of organization, regulation, administration, coordination and communication use mass literacy? The question is posed in its full complexity by the practices of the ruling apparatus of contemporary capitalist societies in the west, based as they are on textually mediated forms of social organization. Rule mediated through textual discourse is inconceivable without mass literacy. (Smith:1975, 1982, 1983)

Our knowledge of contemporary society is to a large extent mediated to us by documents of various kinds. Very little of our knowledge of people, events, social relations and powers arises directly in our immediate experience. Factual statements in documentary form, whether as news, data, information or the like, stand in for an actuality which is not accessible. Socially organized practices of reporting and recording work upon what actually happens or has happened to create a reality in documentary form, and though they are decisive to its characters, their traces are not visible in it. . . .

The construction of social phenomena in their familiar and recognizable forms as they appear to us, is in large part a product of the reporting and accounting procedures of formal organizations which in various ways provide for how the society is governed.

(Smith 1973:1)

### *Literacy for "people's power"*

With the reconstruction of the history of literacy in western social formation comes a much clearer understanding of the contradictory tendencies within literacy, the tension between the emancipating power of literacy and literacy

as an instrument of greater social control, literacy as a liberating tool of the popular classes and literacy as the preserve of the elite. As Quentin Hoare has pointed out, education must be distinguished from other social services, such as housing or health care, which can be treated as goods to be shared more equally and increased in purely quantitative ways. Hoare refers to the very special ambiguity of education:

For on the one hand, it represents a vital human *need* – common to all societies and all people in some form, and as basic as subsistence or shelter. On the other hand, it is a fundamental component of the power structure in any society – the means whereby assent is secured to the values and privileges of the dominant class. Education, in fact, is the point at which vital needs and power structure *immediately intersect*. It is thus never neutral or “innocent”, as the other social services can sometimes be.

(Quoted in Hoyles 1977:35)

Unlike housing, health services or telephones, then, education can never be just a social service. It is, in fact, the assimilation of a social order.

An important theme emerging from the detailed studies of the history of mass literacy is how much the forms of literacy and schooling that emerged were, in fact, imposed. This imposition was carried out to suppress already existent forms linked to the recognition by working people themselves of the power of literacy and their desire to become literate as a way of seeing their own lives go forward. Working class history in England after the 1790s shows a working people struggling to maintain popular organization and desiring information, news, knowledge. There were struggles for working class publications. The pubs served as centers for literacy; newspapers, magazines and books were available not only for individual perusal but for public reading and discussion. Working men paid subscriptions for literary organizations and created libraries for themselves. References to discussion groups, reading groups, libraries, reading rooms and public halls abound. Reading circles were prominent aspects, then, of nineteenth century taverns, pubs and ports of call – all part of collective forms organized by workers in a movement of “social literacy”.<sup>5</sup> The establishment of public libraries in Britain in the middle of the nineteenth century is best understood precisely as a means of suppressing pre-existing alternatives devised by workers themselves as a means of self-education in their efforts for “social literacy”. (Corrigan & Gillespie:1978; Thompson:1963, 1968; Graff:1979)

Central to the traditions of socialist construction is a vision of this kind of “social literacy”, of “people’s power” in a new society where women and

men regain the local control and decision making power about their own lives and communities systematically taken away from them within capitalist society as it has evolved. Tracing the development of the capitalist state, it is possible to identify the moment in the eighteenth century when the property relations in ancient and medieval forms had largely been transformed and when the "state" began to appear as a distinct polity, apparently separated from the realm of the private and personal, distanced from "civil society". "Civil society", collectivities of women and men interacting directly to reproduce the things and ideas and people that made up their social world, was at this point dissolved. These collectivities of producers were individualized, their relatedness to one another now expressed as political and legal relations through "the state". This is one of the important themes of Marx in his writings in the 1840s, to which, significantly, he returns in the later writings.

Civil society embraces the whole material intercourse of individuals within a definite stage of development of productive forces. It embraces the whole commercial and industrial life of a given stage, and, insofar, transcends the state and the nation, though, on the other hand again, it must assert itself in its external relations as nationality and *internally must organise itself as state*.

(1846, our emphasis. Quoted in Corrigan & Sayer 1981:27)

This seeming distance between "state" and "civil society" is both distinctive of and crucial to the functioning of capitalism. The modern state emerged in struggles first against feudalism and later against the working class and constitutes a distinctive form of organization of class power. Its historical specificity lies precisely in its separation from "civil society". What is new is the exercise of the collective class power of the emerging bourgeoisie through a distinct policy or public arena of general interests over against which is posed a depoliticized "civil society", realm of the personal and the individual.

It is these boundaries between the political and the personal, the general and the particular, the collective and the individual which are articulated through the modern state and which are a *sine qua non* for the reproduction of commodity production under capitalism. The state, then, is not independent of society, but an essential form of its organization, creating political subjects through a complex repertoire of institutions, forms and agencies which serve to regulate not only class relations but all of the social relations of production, including class, race/ethnicity, gender, age and location<sup>6</sup>.

State-forms are related to the social relations and conditions of specific modes of production *in their historical development*. State-forms are not



related contingently and accidentally, nor are they externally related – as when the State is considered as a coercive set of relations (e.g. “bodies of armed men, prisons”) but, rather, internally. The forms of State are facets of a given mode of producing things, as essential to reproduction as particular kinds of property or technology – to be thought of, indeed, in the same terms as cultural *eidos* and moral *ethos*. . . . In class societies, State-forms will be both involved in the coercion of the majority and appear (phenomenally, i.e. in immediate experience) as separate from day-to-day production. . . .

(Corrigan (ed.)1980:5/6: emphasis in original)

Mass literacy is integrally linked to this ongoing process of state formation. It is a means by which the set of organizational forms, practices, agencies, institutions and documents that make up “the state” act in concert to gain purchase on women’s and men’s lives, creating an identification as “citizens” of a determinate time and space, political subjects with knowledge of how to decode the state’s regulatory signals of acceptable parameters of how to “be” and “do”.

Access to literacy is, of course, differentially experienced. By no means can literacy be reduced to a set of language skills, with no account taken of the social relations in which these skills are embedded and embodied as prevailing discursive practices<sup>7</sup>. The social construction of subjectivities organized through class, gender, race/ethnicity, age, location etc. include differentiated senses of self as bearers of knowledge, and legitimate participants in particular discursive practices<sup>8</sup>. The very language chosen (or imposed) and the illiterates’ perception of access to – or marginalization from – particular discursive practices as either desirable or threatening is experienced from a determinate position within a set of knowledge and power relations.

“People’s power”, the experience of genuine popular democracy allowing women and men new forms of controlling their lives in workplace, community and family has been a persistent hope and intermittent practice of socialist construction. Building socialism implies building new forms of “state” that dismantle the separation between “civil society” and “state” as it emerged to organize commodity production within capitalist society. A socialist project does not presuppose the perpetuation of the “state” forms prevalent under capitalism that reflect back a misrepresentation of the subordinated sectors and their lives. Nor does a socialist project presuppose the creation of “state” forms that signal ideas and images of the “New Man” (or even the “New Woman”) through a party and bureaucracy that paternalisti-



cally assume political leadership to mean substituting for the voices and energies of ordinary people.

Building "people's power" is central to socialist construction, then, and has power as a historic resonance even when existing practices deny it. "People's power" presupposes new forms of "social literacy" in which collective groups of women and men name and validate their day to day experiences. This includes all the richness and specificity of diversely located groups. Literacy becomes a process of creating rather than transmitting knowledge, in which working people develop a capacity to locate themselves in their own times and spaces, and legitimate their own activities and inter-relatedness. With the establishment of genuine "people's power" a new kind of "civil society" begins to be created, in which people know their own way round and recognize their own ways of seeing and saying as valid and communicable.

It is in the context of these broad conceptualizations of literacy, "state" formation and "people's power" that I want to examine the experience of literacy in a workplace literacy center, Companhia Industrial de Matola (Matola Industrial Company; henceforth referred to as CIM). While the programmes of literacy in CIM were part of the broader national adult education programme being carried out in Mozambique, I am not intending to argue that the experiences of CIM are representative of literacy experiences throughout the country<sup>9</sup>.

CIM is not a typical center in any sense. It is located in the national capital, in an exceptionally large, important and well-organized workplace. It has far more human and material resources for literacy and organizational commitment to it than the great majority of workplaces. Within the framework of literacy defined by the Ministry of Education, CIM's accomplishments are impressive in the field of literacy. The rate of illiteracy within the factory complex has been reduced from 57 percent in 1975 to less than 6 percent ten years later. From 1981 to 1986, 309 people have successfully passed the literacy exam with another 113 people having gone on to complete basic primary schooling. In addition, many CIM workers have pursued general studies and specialized training courses at higher levels. Measured simply in terms of providing access to education, the CIM experience is impressive.

Measured against the broader process of social transformation, however, some different kinds of questions have to be asked. What I propose to do in this study is to look at the role of "popular education" in building a participatory democracy. Clearly this means looking at literacy well beyond simply more democratic access to schooling<sup>10</sup>. It will also be looked at in terms of the experience of participatory democracy within the classroom, and

the extent to which literacy has been a vehicle for changing relations of power and knowledge. I will be looking at the tensions between vertical structures in which the teacher as authority figure regulates classroom discussion around prescribed contents, albeit now replete with socialist images, over against classrooms of empowerment, where people create new knowledge and communicative practices out of their own experiences. The study will also look at literacy as a training process for participatory democracy, exploring the degree to which the literacy center feeds into other institutions of "people's power" in which old hierarchies of power and knowledge organized through class, race and gender are being challenged.

Clearly the process of establishing new forms of "people's power" is a very rough and uneven one, full of advances and retreats, breakthroughs and errors. In Mozambique, as in any transitional process, old forms of capitalist culture and new forms of socialist culture live side by side, at times in clear lines of confrontation, at times with their distinctions blurred. This study will attempt to get at the texture of that experience with the women and men in one literacy center, capturing the mixture of fear and desire and the many continuing tensions between senses of self shaped by the old inter-locking hierarchies of subordination and the hope of literacy as a space for genuine forms of "people's power" and participatory democracy.

The women and men doing literacy classes after independence brought to literacy a social knowledge of how to "do school" and indeed a socially constructed notion of what it meant to be classified as "illiterate". Most of them were in the 25-45 age range and had grown up in rural districts of southern Mozambique. Not even the most remote village social system was immune from the impact of colonial institutions that worked to shape identity as "citizen" or "native". The repertoire of the colonial "state's" forms to regulate social life included an ongoing and constantly changing process of regulating class, race/ethnicity, gender, age and location. The schooling system set up by colonialism was one of the key institutions in this process.

In Chapter 2, I will look at the construction of the illiterate as an administrative category, embedded within a larger discourse turning on the moral project of civilizing the "indigenous". I will analyze how this project of formalizing the distance between the "civilized" and the "savage" relates to the need to regulate flows of cheap labour for the expanding mining economy of South Africa. In Chapter 3, I will look at the role of the colonial schooling system in that moral project, exploring it as an instrument of failure rather than success in schooling. In Chapter 4, I will look at the radical recasting at independence of what it meant to be illiterate, and the spontaneous movement of self-education that emerged. I will explore with the "state"

sponsored literacy campaigns subsequently introduced the tensions between popular forms of literacy and tendencies to formalization and the reduction of the illiterate to an administrative category rather than the human resources for socialist construction.

In Chapters 5-8, I will study the experiences of literacy for the women and men at one workplace literacy center. In Chapter 5, I will outline in some detail the research methodology and my own role both as researcher and as cooperant with a lengthy involvement in Mozambique's literacy programmes prior to doing the research. In Chapter 6, I will look at the organization of "time" for doing literacy and the fundamental tensions between time for schooling and time for production in workplace based literacy, the more complex still in the context of war and a broad economic crisis forcing urban wage earners to improvise "informal" economic activities in order to survive. In Chapter 7, I will look at the literacy center as a "space" for particular kinds of social communication that include the imposition of a language, a way to speak it, and a set of texts defining the contents of what is to be read, written and said. I will show how all of these are locked into a particular process of evaluation based on an annual national exam that serves to validate transmission of knowledge and rote learning rather than social communication and creation of knowledge. In Chapter 8, I will look at the interlocking hierarchies organized through class, race/ethnicity, and gender in which the literacy students and teachers lives were located, and how those subordinated positions impacted on the literacy center. In Chapter 9, I will analyze these experiences of literacy as indicative of fundamental problems in the broader process of socialist construction and look briefly at the emergence of new spaces for popular education, including a movement for renewal within the state sponsored literacy programmes themselves.

## CHAPTER 2

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# *The colonial state as educator*

We do not believe that a rapid passage from their African superstitions to our civilization is possible. For us to have arrived where we are presently, hundreds of generations before us fought, suffered and learned, minute by minute, the intimate secrets in the fountain of life. It is impossible for them to traverse this distance of centuries in a single jump.

Armindo Monteiro, Portuguese Colonial Minister, 1935  
(Quoted in Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:40)

The colonized . . . is a person without a temporal dimension. He [sic] is a person unable to locate himself historically within his society and unable to locate his society historically. . . . The lack of historical dimension is the result of a deliberate and planned action of colonialism. I can remember . . . a whole generation, mine included, who delighted in reading Frobenius because Frobenius, at a point in the introduction to *The History of African Civilization* had the following expression: "When the Portuguese arrived" – it was to the coast of our country he was referring – "they found a people civilized to the marrow of their bones".

For us, this was a phrase that became a watchword. And why did it become a watchword? . . . We were locating ourselves in time and space. . . . To locate ourselves time-wise was to seek to know where we came from historically, to know whether we brought a culture . . . a civilization within us, if we were bearers of history . . . or if we had been an abandoned branch of humanity . . . waiting for the magic wand of colonialism to arouse us into motion, into History, into the World.

Address by Sergio Vieira to the Second Conference Ministry of  
Education and Culture, 1977<sup>1</sup>

*"Civilizing" the "illiterate"*

The classification of people as illiterate in Mozambique took on resonance only at the point when the newly established colonial government set out to consolidate its control and to open up social life to regulatory and controlling practices. The educational process of relocating African people in time and space, of situating them as a people without civilization whose time began when Vasco de Gama reached their shores, whose space was that of an "overseas" province of a distant metropole was carried out at the beginning of the present century. It was in this period that women and men in Mozambique came to be categorized as "illiterate" with the provision of state sponsored schooling signalled as remedy for this "deficiency". This can best be understood as part of a larger process of establishing colonial modes of governance. The need for an ideological frame situating the African population as "other", and the mechanisms to create a distance between "us", safely within the boundaries of civilization, and "them", relegated to a position outside, emerged at a point where a centralizing body, the newly established colonial government, began to establish forms of ruling. Administrative categorization of "illiterates" within a larger discourse turned on status as "citizen" or "indigenous", and became an important instrument for establishing control, and, indeed, for the formation of the colonial state.

The trajectory of state formation and educational provision in Mozambique weaves along an even more tortuous path than that of most peripheral dependent states. The path in part is difficult because of the vexing and much contested question of how to theorize the state in an adequate manner. In Mozambique, as elsewhere, there is a need to talk about the state in a way that avoids reducing it to a reflex of whatever class holds economic power. An adequate theorization of the workings of the state needs to open up instead the multiple and changing reality of state formation, i.e. the state as a shifting repertoire of forms, institutions and agents that shape social identity, regulate race, ethnicity and gender, and provide moral regulation and the seemingly neutral sets of institutions for ordering the day to day running of society. More broadly, state formation must be seen as an ongoing process of forming a public, a people, a nation.

The state, then, is best understood as an ideological project. (Abrams:1988) Its extensive bases of power are located not just in the organization of production but in the richly variegated texture of moral, cultural and habitual forms and institutions. There is an ongoing process of structuring at any given historical moment to legitimize, de-legitimize and re-legitimize a given social order.

For Third World dependent states, the question is even more complex. The internal dynamic of these pre-capitalist social formation and their partial transformation into capitalist forms posed one set of problems around state formation. At the same time, the impact of the colonial encounter and consolidation has shaped a variegated and uneven texture of social control, characterized more by disjuncture than by cohesion. The resultant state forms have been formed, reformed and in-formed not only by internally generated social forces but in significant ways from outside the social formation. There is a need for state forms that face two ways, having purchase both internally and externally. The shifting constellation of forms and institutions making up the state has a project of internal legitimation while at the same time being subject to a multiplicity of external determinations<sup>2</sup>.

For Mozambique, I would argue that both the internal project and the external determinations are even more complex than for most Third World states. Mozambique has not only had a history of settler colonialism, with the colonial state often caught between the need to be seen to be governing effectively in response to the needs and aspiration of the settler community over against metropolitan determinations of effective governance, and all this in the context of the legitimation exercise in relation to the subordinated African population. Moreover, Mozambique has a history of double dependency, dominated by both Portugal and South Africa, both of which were in turn subordinated to British imperial ambitions<sup>3</sup>.

Clearly education plays a central role in such an ideological project, not reduced simply to state-sponsored public schooling but understood as the multiplicity of experiences that educate within a given polity. State forms and institutions and agencies themselves play a profoundly educational role. The repertoire of state forms at work in shaping subjectivities and constructing social identities is vast – bureaucracies and legislation, pomp and circumstance, the public acts that symbolically represented and in so doing, defined the nation along particular axes of time and space, the media, organizational structures of family, community and workplace.

Portugal itself exhibited the classic features of underdevelopment, functioning on the periphery of Europe as an exporter of raw materials and labour and an importer of finished industrial goods. (Munslow 1983:2) In consequence, its capacity to shape its colonial holding to build up the metropolitan economy was very limited. Capital accumulation even to set up the mechanisms for colonial exploitation had to be found elsewhere. In the colonial capital of Lourenco Marques, only 27 percent of the investments in 1900 depended on Portuguese capital. It was British capital that financed the city's electrical system, trolley system and first modern port facilities, a

situation not dissimilar to that of Lisbon itself. (Penvenne 1979a:3,4) The nature of the link was succinctly characterized by Portuguese historian Oliveira Martins. People think that England is bound to look after us; but what will happen when there are no more Africas with which to pay her? (Munslow 1983:4)

From late in the nineteenth century, it was South Africa that exerted the main economic control over Mozambique. Mozambique was tightly integrated into the southern African economic sub-system and specifically shaped as a major supplier of vitally needed cheap labour to work South Africa's vast mineral resources. It also played a key role as provider of rail and port services to land-locked Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Nyasaland (now Malawi) and to the gold boom territory of the Rand for which Lourenco Marques was the closest link to the sea. Until 1909, English was the language of the port in Lourenco Marques, while Beira had an English language newspaper. By 1917, customs duties and trans-shipping charges constituted the single largest source of income for Mozambique. (Isaacman & Isaacman:1983; de Brito:1980; Munslow:1983)

### *Portugal establishes control*

On the eve of the scramble for the partition of Africa in 1880, after three hundred years of nominal rule, Portugal had only a limited influence on a few coastal settlements. Often this amounted to a token force to establish a historic claim. Even important administrative centers such as Lourenco Marques, Quelimane and Inhambane had only a few military and civilian personnel, characterized by poor training and a propensity for smuggling and bribery. (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:19; Penvenne 1979a:5) The schemes for colonial settlement were singularly unsuccessful. Governor Noronha described the settlers in Lourenco Marques in the 1890s as deported soldiers, "degredados", (those in disgrace, being punished by exile) and "a certain number of functionaries sufficiently unfit not to find placement in the metropole". (Penvenne 1979a:5)

The diverse African societies throughout the territory were adamantly opposed to any infringement on their autonomy, each having become skilled in working out a "modus vivendi" with the shifting demands of the European presence in their midst over the centuries. In the south up to the last quarter of the nineteenth century, relations were basically those of trade, with active barter of ivory, horn, skins and oilseeds in exchange for cloth, beads, hoes, firearms and alcohol. In other areas of the country, slave trading was a major activity until well after mid-century, with coastal sultanates depending on the



export of captives to maintain their political and economic power. Portugal's attempts to conquer these societies were largely unsuccessful. There were important defeats for the Portuguese colonial army in the north in the 1850s. The rich and densely populated Zambezi valley region saw five unsuccessful campaigns launched by the Portuguese between 1867 and 1875.

At the Congress of Berlin in 1884-85, the Great Powers rejected Portugal's claim to Mozambique, decreeing pacification and effective control as prerequisites for recognition as a colonial power. The next 25 years brought a new militancy from Portugal and shifting and conflicting claims for territory with Britain as the Lisbon dream of a Portuguese Central Africa linking Angola and Mozambique entered into conflict with the British dream of a Cape to Cairo route.

The wars of resistance from 1885-1913 were intense, as Africans throughout Mozambique sought to evade Portuguese control. Politics ranging from the Swahili sheikdoms of the north to the Ronga chieftaincies in the south fought bitterly, knowing that Portuguese control meant harsh taxes and expropriation of land and labour. The African polities, however, were unable to create the broad-based popular opposition necessary to withstand Portugal's military superiority. Weakened by competing with each other over the slave trade and by popular insurrections mounted by subject populations resenting the daily tyrannies of Afro-Portuguese or Afro-Goan leaders in the conquest states of the Zambezi valley, the African societies were defeated. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Portuguese had effective control over the southern half of Mozambique and within the next decade, the northern part as well<sup>4</sup>.

With success and the establishment of a colonial empire came the need to legitimize. Out of this came an elaborate exercise to try to legitimate what, if seen openly, was unacceptable, a persuasion of ruler and ruled that the super exploitation of black labour and privileged position of white settler were based on a natural order in which one was inferior and the other superior. Integral to it was the idea of a civilizing and Christianizing mission belonging to the Portuguese and a position outside of "civilization" in some territory of savagery and childishness for the African. The whole ideological construct turned on forms and institutions regulating race and class.

There were three distinct periods in which the two sub-metropolitan powers negotiated and re-negotiated their interests through a shifting colonial state structure. In the early colonial period (1800-1926), southern Mozambique became a labour reserve for the South African mines while the center and north were leased to foreign charter companies. In the absence of investment capital from Portugal itself, foreign companies, mainly British, were set up



by the colonial state to exploit two thirds of the country. Working in close cooperation with South African, Rhodesian and English interests, they formed states within state and exploited with extreme cruelty, turning their territories into tax farms and migrant labour reserves.

In the middle colonial period from 1926-1960, the Salazar regime attempted to use the colonies in a more classic manner as sources of raw materials for the nascent industrial capitalist class that had helped to bring Salazar to power. There was an attempt to limit foreign economic influence and at times direct contradictions emerged between the demands for labour to produce cash crops for export such as cotton and later rice over against continuing needs for labour export to neighbouring countries. Both forced labour and forced crop cultivation were intensified, and a very substantial number of Mozambicans fled into neighbouring countries. There are estimates that as many as 380,000 had fled to neighbouring British Nyasaland (Malawi) by the end of the Second World War and 476,300 by 1966. There were 123,316 Mozambicans in Tanzania by 1957 and many more Mozambican refugees in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South Africa. (Munslow 1983:70) Clearly such large numbers in exile proved a fertile ground for the first nationalist movements.

In the late colonial period from 1960-1974, Portugal found itself faced with an armed struggle for national liberation. Unwilling to decolonize because of its inability to neo-colonize, it finally opened its doors fully to foreign investment in 1965, resulting in a period of even closer integration with South Africa, by then a growing industrial power.

Delineating briefly the texture of the colonial state as a set of forms, institutions and practices shaping the world of the Mozambican peasant producer, we see an all pervasive regulating power that succeeded in totally disrupting socio-economic development of village communities with a much more brutal and crude use of coercive powers than was characteristic of colonialism in other parts of Africa. In large measure, the excessive brutality of Portuguese colonialism was linked to Portugal's extreme weakness as a colonial power (Anderson:1961).

### *Local texture of the colonial state*

Two central institutions emerged at the turn of the century to regulate peasant existence and, in so doing, establish the state. These were the system of forced labour known as "chibalo", and the system of migrant labour. The first native labour code was established in 1899, and the "chibalo" system of forced labour continued in various guises up until 1961. Even prior to 1899, the

colonial state had introduced a number of measures designed to force African producers off their land and into a pool of cheap labour for European plantations, construction and operation of the ports and roads, domestic service and the like. These had proved ineffective however. Some peasants simply paid the taxes through increased cash crop production. Others sought work in the mines and farms of the richer neighbouring British colonies.

In 1899, a government commission was appointed to make recommendations concerning the development of the colony. The question of mechanisms to tap the African labour force and channel it into wage labour was already the subject of much analysis, as testimony presented to the Junta Consultiva do Governo in 1891 shows clearly.

The European worker works in order to eat, and in nearly all countries there are more hands available than local industry requires, thus develops the enslavement of labor by capital – of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. In Lourenco Marques, as soon as the native has [earned] enough to marry one or more women, he then has his sustenance guaranteed by the labor of his wives and the product of his own labor then goes to buy more women, several head of cattle or to get drunk on alcohol. The result is that if in Europe the worker is in reality more dependent upon the capitalist than vice versa, (and this is very clear from the total lack of results workers have been able to realize by the majority of strikes), in Lourenco Marques, the Europeans, commerce, government projects, the railway and port works, etc. are dependent upon black [laborers] who in their turn barely depend or do not at all depend upon whites.

Therefore, if in Europe as a result of the constant abuse of labor by the capitalist, the state finds it necessary to protect the workers, in Lourenco Marques, given the reverse situation, it is incumbent upon the government to *defend the interests of the European colony* [emphasis added] which more and more becomes identified with the interests of the state. Not only is this dependency felt by the employer with casual day laborers under the guidance of salaried [white] workers, but the same situation, or yet worse, attains with servants. No binding contract with blacks is possible under the actual laws now in effect.

(Quoted in Penvenne 1979a:8)

The primary conclusion of the government commission was the need to regulate the African labour force.

We need native labor, we need it in order to better the conditions of these laborers, we need it for the economy of Europe and for the progress of Africa. Our tropical Africa will not grow without the Africans. The capital needed to exploit it, and it so needs to be exploited, lies in the procure-

ment of labour for exploitation. Abundant, cheap, solid labor . . . and this labor, given the circumstances, will never be supplied by European immigrants.

(Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:33)

Antonio Enes, leader of one the victorious colonial armies in 1895 and a central figure in establishing early colonial policies worked with the government commission. The racist perceptions underlying his actions are a matter of public record.

It is true that the generous soul of Wilberforce has not transmigrated into my body, but I don't believe I have in me the blood of a slaver; I even feel an inner fondness for the Negro, this big child, instinctively bad like all children – may all mothers forgive me – though docile and sincere. I do not consider him something to be exterminated because of the necessity of expansion of the white race, although *I may believe in natural inferiority*.

(Quoted in Mondlane 1983:37. Emphasis in original)

The language of the commission's report touches on the same racist themes, interspersed with more elevated tones, purporting the lofty purpose of promoting Africa's advancement, and carrying out Europe's civilizing mission in Africa. The coercive side, readily justified by race, is also quite visible.

The State, not only as the sovereign of semi-barbaric populations, but also as a depository of social authority, should have no scruples in obliging and if necessary forcing these rude Negroes in Africa, these ignorant Pariahs in Asia, these half-savages from Oceania, to work, that is, to better themselves by work, to acquire through work the happiest means of existence, to civilize themselves through work. . . .

(The committee's emphasis. Quoted in Duffy 1959:153)

Out of this royal commission came the first native labour ordinance. The state took on itself the task of moral regulation, the right to define what constituted "idleness". The legal rationale for forced labour was encoded in article one of the 1899 labour code. "All native inhabitants of the Portuguese overseas are subject to the moral and legal obligations to seek to acquire through work those things which they lack to subsist and to improve their own social conditions. They have full liberty to choose the means through which to comply with this obligation, but if they do not comply in some way, the public authorities may force them to comply." (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:34)

The Portuguese undoubtedly shared the fundamental attitude towards African society depicted in the Transvaal Labour Commission report in neighbouring South Africa a few years later in 1903.

... the scarcity of labour is due first and foremost to the fact that the African native tribes are, for the most part, primitive, pastoral or agricultural communities who possess exceptional facilities for the regular and full supply of their animal wants, and whose standard of economic needs is extremely low.

(Ashforth 1987:75)

Through the government commission, then, a new dispensation of labour and land came to be legitimized. Part of what the commissions accomplished was to construct the African population as "native", an administrative category situated not only as "other" but also as "deficient". Within the framework of its inquiry, the commission constructed a particular kind of knowledge with a particular claim to truth. It solicited information from certain voices, certainly not those of African producers themselves. The commission itself was part of an ongoing process of state formation, the state legitimizing itself through a "display" of the work of governing for all. Through the royal commission, a particular problem was worked up, a territory of social relations constituted with boundaries of authority set up and relations of communication, coordination and accountability established (Chua:1975b). In the case of Mozambique, the concept of native was constituted, embedded in a reconstructed traditional setting. The colonial state took on a set of institutional and accountability procedures to regulate the Native's "problem" of idleness into productivity, i.e. permanent availability as cheap labour for the colonial state<sup>5</sup>.

An important aspect of state formation, then, was the establishment of the administrative structures to open up "native" social life to governance. In the areas not administered by European concessionary companies, three levels of administrative power subordinated to the governor-general were established. Immediately below the governor were the district governors, usually military officers appointed by Lisbon. The districts were divided into European and non-European areas, with the councils of the European areas enjoying limited self-government. Even by the 1920s, fewer than 15,000 Europeans resided in Mozambique, most of them concentrated in the then Lourenço Marques and the other important port and railway center of Beira. The African population by and large lived in rural subdistricts which, for administrative purposes, were further subdivided into localities. Each of the subdistricts and localities was governed by a Portuguese official, a "chefe de posto". In terms of formal

schooling they were all minimally educated and poorly trained, establishing petty tyrannies in which they had unchallenged power to accuse, apprehend, try and sentence their subjects. (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:29)

Below the "chefé de posto" was a network of African collaborators. The local chieftaincy structure was already by this time both in disarray and disrepute as we have seen above. It had worked out a variegated *modus vivendi* with European colonial presence in patterns of trade, including slave trade and compliance with various labour demands. Nonetheless, the chieftaincy structure became the local level government apparatus, in essence paid functionaries of the colonial state. The "regulos" or senior chiefs were exempt from taxation and forced labour, in return for which they were expected to collect taxes, "recruit" labour, maintain order and settle minor disputes. Their perks of office included the right to use forced peasant labour on their own lands, higher prices for cash crops, recruitment bonuses and prizes such as cloth and bicycles for "stimulating" African production.

As in other parts of southern Africa at the time, a reconstitution of "traditional" structures was a key element in modes of governance for the "native" community. Even peoples such as the Makonde in northern Mozambique who had lived historically without chiefs had a "tradition" of chieftaincy created for them by the colonial officials, who handpicked collaborators to fill the positions<sup>6</sup>.

An African police force of a particularly brutalized genre added to the arbitrary and repressive texture of the state at local level. Hand in hand with the "chefé de posto" and the "regulo" were the "sipaios", made up of former colonial soldiers, sons of loyalist chiefs and ex-warriors, slavers and mercenaries who unhesitatingly carried out what the only slightly milder coercion of the "regulo" left incomplete. Arangatoni Mikiras, an agricultural worker who had lived and worked in the province of Tete during the colonial regime had this to say:

People were put in chains and obliged to work – it was forced labour. It started when boys were fourteen or fifteen years old. They had to go every year. Some were sent to one place and others to another. The administrator sent *cipaios* (local police) to get the people and bind them, and after they would be brought to the administration. Then the *recrutador* would ask them if they wanted to go with him – and they were standing in front of him in chains! People were paid 100 escudos per month.

(Quoted in Munslow 1983:35)

This construction of "native" and the "traditional" takes on particular importance around the question of land. Sovereignty was being exercised not

over a community of property-owning individuals with inalienable land rights as in "civilized" society, but over a combination of individuals whose property rights were vested in the "tribe". The tribe, in turn, was ruled by its reconstituted "chief", now conveniently representing the colonial regime at local level. This construction of the "traditional" worked to make it difficult for Africans to act freely as property-owning individuals, employing labour and entering the market at will. It provided the mechanism for the colonial state to make them invisible as legitimate aspirants to the same rights as settler producers, situating them instead in a particular set of rights and obligations inhering in the community as a whole. This construction of the "native" allowed a characterization of the African population as "idle children" needing moral regulation and served to legitimize the growing labour demands by the state<sup>7</sup>.

African producers were prevented from developing agriculture and were forced onto the labour market, then, by a variety of legislative mechanisms. In addition to land tenure restrictions, the colonial state did not allow African producers to employ labour. They received lower prices for their cash crops, and in regions such as Zambesia, they had labour obligations in lieu of taxes.

International pressure against forced labour in the Portuguese colonies began early and the labour code adopted in 1928, just after Salazar came to power, ostensibly put an end to forced labour except for penal correction and necessary public works. The new legislation spoke of giving Africans "full liberty of choosing the work which best suits them" and of "working to secure their livelihood and of thereby contributing to the welfare of humanity". (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:41) Yet in 1930, another piece of taxation legislation passed which created a situation that obliged most men to work at least a six month contract per year. In 1942, the governor-general issued a decree to close existing loopholes in the legislation and lock forced labour yet more firmly into place. The definition of "idle" was made to include all men between the ages of 18-25 who had not done a contract in South Africa or Rhodesia for the previous six months, were not at the time employed by a foreign firm or the state, and were not cultivating cotton or rice.

### *Cheap labour for the South African mines*

Complementary to the "chibalo" system in regulating labour was the system of migrant labour. The final decades of the nineteenth century brought discoveries of gold in the Rand and marked the beginning of Mozambique's domination by South Africa. With a fixed price for gold and high capital investment costs for imported equipment, the guarantee of profitability lay in

abundant sources of cheap labour. The South African Chamber of Mines wanted to control and regulate labour migration as a means of preventing free competitions for labour that could draw wages upward. A labour force freely selling its labour to the expanding labour market developing in South African agriculture, industry, commerce and mining could well force mine wages upwards. A mechanism to force mine labour to live and work in two different socio-economic environments was the answer. The regulation of both time (through contracts) and space (through limitations to mining compounds) for mine labourers precluded the kind of contact with the expanding South African economy that would have allowed free entry into the labour market. The construction of "native homelands" inside South Africa and the agreements worked out with South Africa's poorer neighbours to guarantee conditions for recruitment of short-term migrant labour suited admirably the purposes of the South African Chamber of Mines. (van Onselen:1976; Katzenellenbogen:1982; Marks and Rathbone: 1982; First:1983; Ashforth:1987)

The origins of migrant labour in South Africa date to well before the Portuguese consolidated their control over Mozambique in the colonial wars of 1885-87. By 1879, there were some 12,000 Mozambicans working in various parts of South Africa; by 1897, more than 60,000 were employed in the Rand alone. This practice of migrant labour was encouraged by a complex interplay between local chiefs and "numzane" or homestead owners turning on control over land, cattle and brideprice. Labour extraction from young men not able to pay cattle bridewealth was controlled through this system<sup>8</sup>.

The supplies of labour through local chieftaincy structures were not sufficient to keep up with the development of reef mining and the enormous flows of cheap labour called for when deep-level mines opened up in 1895.

These the Mocambican chiefs and numzane were unable to supply because their political position was dependent on the kinship system, with all its rights and obligations, and on the existing relations of production. They were thus constrained to protect the worker's wage and his domestic means of production. Colonialism was fettered by no such circumstances, and it was only the colonial state, established after the defeat of the Gaza king Gungunyana in 1895, that was progressively able to free labour from its materials possession – and from the rights and obligations embodied in the social relations of the old order. . . . only the colonial state was able to use organised violence to propel workers onto the market for, unlike the chiefs and numzane, its only responsibility towards the workforce was to ensure the conditions of its physical reproduction. The colonial state was able to use the apparatus of government, army, police, prisons and chiefs working as government agents,



together with the threat of forced labour and portorage, military conscription, compulsory cultivation, corporal punishment and imprisonment to coerce the workers onto the market, while at the same time restricting Africans to reserves where their access to a means of production outside of wage labour was strictly limited.

(Harries 1982:158,159)

The entire southern third of Mozambique was drawn into the orbit of the South African economy, servicing its continuing need for cheap labour and for transport and shipping facilities. By the turn of the century, mining capital was employing 54,000 labourers, two thirds of whom came from Mozambique. The colonial government had steady sources of revenue from recruitment license fees, passport fees, and customs duties on goods imported by the returning miners. As a result of mining income, higher taxes were levied on southern Mozambique. In addition, major agreements were worked out concerning trans-shipping through Mozambican ports, with the result that by 1917, the single largest source of colonial income, amounting to one third of the state's revenue, came from customs duties and related trans-shipping charges linked to mining. (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:36)

The colonial state's role in setting up institutions to rent out Mozambican labour to neighbouring countries through the contract labour system was clearly the most dramatic instance of state intervention in the labour process. For the African peasant producer in southern Mozambique, locked into a new system of bondage by the reconstructed chieftaincy cum local level colonial administrator, contract labour was experienced as a more attractive option than what the local economy had on offer. The "chibalo" system created a generalized climate of terror, since at any moment a peasant could be pulled from whatever activity he was carrying out and be forced to work on a state-imposed tasks, public or private. State legislation restricting the African population with regard to land, labour (both control of their own labour and employment of that of others), prices for their produce, and licenses and access to credit to trade. This effectively ruled out the option to survive as private producers. A 16-18 month contract in the mines with some cash income at the end of it looked attractive in comparison. Increased interests in imported commodities such as cloth and hand tools and bicycles also necessitated cash, which was very hard to come by with the artificially low prices offered to African producers for their cash crops by the colonial economy.

The restrictions of time and space for the migrant labourers to a determinate number of months between the mine shafts and the hostels of the mine compound gave little opportunity for exploring job options on the larger South



African labour market, although loopholes were clearly found and significant numbers of Mozambicans did not return from South Africa. Restriction on movement also gave limited opportunity to compare mine wages for migrant workers in relation to wage levels of others working in the burgeoning South African economy. Compared to life in Mozambique, where agricultural production for African producers was systematically suppressed and wage labour controlled through the forced labour system, the option to take on a contract to the mines looked attractive.

### *"Idle" men and "invisible" women*

If male peasant producers were declared "idle" unless engaged in contract labour, employed by a foreign firm or the state or production of rice or cotton, the labour of women peasant producers remained below the horizon of visibility in any form. The systems of forced labour and migrant labour were experienced differently by men and women and had an enormous impact on family structures. Both systems were based on exploitation of labour power without taking any responsibility for its reproduction. "Chibalo" did not supply anything beyond the means for physical survival of the worker himself, and even that was at times precarious. As we have seen above, men of all ages were rounded up by the "regulos" and brought to the local administrator who either put them to work on state projects or handed them over to owners of tea and sisal plantations. No provision was made for their families. The money earned at best covered the taxes imposed by the regime. The entire burden for family subsistence fell on the women, placing them in key positions as food producers.

Migrant labour patterns had a similar effect, but took men away for even longer periods of time. Migrant labour came to signify a normal part of attaining manhood, referred to by labour recruiters in the 1890s as a "form of initiation" and by a missionary in 1891 as a "tour of duty". (Harries 1982:157)

After a period of service in the mines, young men were treated with new respect as "gayisa", those who have returned from the mines and are a source of wealth. Red-coats, smoking-jackets, hats and trouser bought on the mines were the symbols of their new status. Men who remained at home and refused to work on the mines were denigrated as "mumparras", narrow-minded and ignorant provincials.

(Harries 1982:158)

The traditional bride price payable in cattle came to be payable in goods brought back from trips to the mines. As the consumer goods demanded by

prospective in-laws increased, more trips to the mines became necessary to pay off the inflated bride price. Goods unavailable in Mozambique became part of the package, the bride thus being abandoned with even greater frequency to labour alone on her farm.

In the traditional division of labour in rural areas, men had played an important role in clearing fields and harvesting the crops. The physical absence of all able-bodied men over long periods of time resulted in a general decline in agricultural production. Women were left with the entire work load of both production and reproduction. There is no doubt that the amalgam of old and new forms of oppression resulted in consolidating women's subordinate position even more.

Men's dependence on women to supply the subsistence needs of the family increased proportionately with their involvement in migrant labour, and, in this way, much of the exploitation involved in homestead production was passed on to women. By increasing the burden placed on women in the production process, the "numzane" increased the cadets' [young men] dependence on women to supplement their wage labour with the agricultural production needed to reproduce the family. This increased exploitation of women was an important reason conditioning the cadet's decision to return home with the brideprice necessary to complete his debt to the elders. For with migrant labour, the establishment and maintenance of the homestead came to rest almost entirely on its female members, and it was the product of their labour and fertility that gave to the cadets the possibility of entry into the dominant "numzane" grouping.

(Harries 1982:158)

The export of labour power to South Africa clearly had an enormous impact on Mozambique's internal development. It was not only African peasant producers who were thwarted in their desire to cultivate the land and develop agriculture. Settlers and officials of the colonial government also felt the negative impact of migrant labour. In 1909, there were some expressions of a more generalized resistance to mine labour and South African domination. There was a move to establish Portuguese as the language of the Lourenco Marques port rather than English. Governor Cabral of Inhambane province complained about the lack of labour available for developing agriculture in that province. He cited Governor Cardoso's alarm at statistics indicating that between 1903 and 1906, some 75,370 men left Inhambane of whom only 43,885 returned. (Katzenellenbogen 1982:102) Cabral felt that the problems went beyond loss of labour power, however, and threatened the core of the civilizing mission itself.

To the problems of depopulation was added that of denationalization, of which flagrant proof could be found in that it was rare to find an African speaking Portuguese, whereas many adopted English names such as Jones or Siquespence. This was part of the loss of Portuguese prestige as the dominant race.

(Katzenellenbogen 1982:103)

The regulatory and controlling practices of the state through "chibalo" and migrant labour took on yet another dimension after the Salazar regime had had time to further consolidate its power. There was a desire to establish the more classic colonial relationship with Mozambique, resulting in the introduction of forced cultivation of particular crops, thereby supplying raw materials for the metropole. Forced cotton production was introduced in 1938 to supply the raw materials for the newly established textile industry and compulsory rice cultivation for the towns four years later. Twelve Portuguese companies received monopoly rights over huge areas of Mozambique in which they forced peasants to grow cotton, whether propitious conditions for cotton production existed or not. In other areas such as Inhambane, a 50 metre plot for cotton production was established in each administrative unit. Shortly thereafter, every married couple was forced to cultivate a cotton field of eight metres. Beatings were handed out as punishment for failed crops. Only the wives of the cotton overseers and those in the military were exempt. Wives of "chibalo" workers and migrant workers were forced to leave food production on which family subsistence depended to grow cotton.

Cotton production figures grew steadily, reaching almost 46,000 tons near the end of the Salazar regime. The number of African peasants drawn into cotton production peaked at 791,000 in 1944 and later stabilized at about 500,000. Forced crop cultivation basically meant hunger for the African population. The Bishop of Beira commented as follows:

Since the beginning of the cotton production, stretches of fertile land had stopped producing food for the population and there had been acute hunger in the region. In one of the dioceses the spectre of death had fallen over the population, because of lack of food. I know some districts where the African got for their harvest fifty to ninety escudos. In the same regions and localities, if the Africans had cultivated crops other than cotton, the same plots of land would have yielded a harvest of which they would have got two to four thousand escudos.

(Quoted in Munslow 1983:36-7)

While women were ostensibly exempt from "chibalo" (although this frequently was not upheld), they were very much involved in forced produc-

tion of cotton and rice. The forced cotton production necessitated dramatic changes in the peasant family division of labour. As a labour-intensive crop, cotton pulled labour away from subsistence production, accounting in large measure for the backwardness of this sector in producing both the food and other commodities needed by peasant families. In some cases, it led to a switch in peasant diet, with women forced to adopt hardy, drought-resistant cassava over the more labour demanding (and more nutritious) crops of sorghum or maize. Women and children were forced to guarantee family production of cotton and there were many instance of men running away from "chibalo" labour to assist their wives with the cotton harvest.

The Archives of the Cotton Institute include a survey of Gaza Province done in 1941 which concludes that "50 percent of the women could not produce the forced cultures w<sup>h</sup>out seriously reducing food production". (Quoted in Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:54) The colonial state, as late as 1959, noted in a confidential document that "the majority of the population is underfed" and went on to warn that "it is absolutely necessary that cotton producers have sufficient food to enable them to work". (Ibid:55) The brutal super-exploitation of the labour force was such, then, that its very reproduction was in jeopardy.

*"The man the whites appointed is the son of a nobody"*

The Portuguese colonial regime, then was intent on refashioning Mozambique in its own image. In a manner characteristic of the colonial encounter, be it through representatives of church or state, there was an assumption of Africa as featureless, a *tabula rasa* without the social organization or artifacts of a civilization, a blank page on which to begin writing history. A sustained exercise was carried out to construct Africans as child-like, little distinct from the savage natural order that the African continent itself presented to European eyes. Integral to this was a moral discourse working to create an almost unbridgeable chasm between savagery and civilization. This sustained exercise was a necessary fiction for the systematic assault on African resources that was about to take place, and particularly the massive shifts of human labour power that were to dislocate millions of lives throughout the region over the next century<sup>9</sup>.

In Mozambique, each district capital was replete with the architecture of empire. The district administrator's office and home, the church and parish offices, and later the doctor's home were constructed in Portuguese style, standing out in splendour adjacent to the formal park areas that made up the town square. A "national" history was created over the years, with celebra-

tions of Portugal's national days, the introduction of Portuguese culture from regional folk dances and the epic poems of Camoes, to city clubs offering *fado*<sup>10</sup> and side walk cafes with *vinho verde*. There were innumerable large and small signallings of what "citizenship" in the Lusitanian empire signified. Clearly the school system which we shall look at in detail in the next chapter was a key factor in this process.

A series of institutions, forms and agencies were established, then, to superimpose a "national history" on the diverse social groupings throughout Mozambique, to project the idea of nation and regulate a social identity with all the pomp and circumstance, national monuments and heroes, imposition of a language and day to day administrative ordering to go with it. It was a project carried out, however, with such a crude hand that it was even less effective than in many other parts of Africa.

The forms of survival and protest against the colonial state's incursions into the fabric of day to day life at village level were various. The tyrannies of the "regulo" were all-pervasive, with physical escape from the locality at times presenting itself as the only recourse. Contract labour, escape to urban employment or flight to neighbouring countries were three of the responses. Leduangane Maxafage, a worker in the Maputo City Council, described his flight from his village to what was then Lourenco Marques in this way:

I came to work in Lourenco Marques because of "chibalo". I couldn't sleep in my own home. I lived like a dog going into the bush at night because there were so many police seizing people.

(Quoted in Penvenne 1979b:5)

For those who didn't flee permanently, there were many other forms of resistance to tax collectors and labour recruiters such as falsification of age and marital status or temporary absences across neighbouring borders or into remote areas. The extensive history of protest is only now being reconstructed, and includes everything from actions of outright sabotage to daily ingenuity in outwitting the overseers demands.

There were instances of widespread local rebellions such as the Barue rebellion of 1917-1921 in which seven ethnic groups united, with a force of 15,000 armed men. They were angered to fight the Portuguese by their conditions of forced labour, increased taxation and mandatory cotton production. As if these were not enough, they were also being conscripted into the army and policemen sent to their villages raped the women at will. Two months after the insurrection had begun, spurred on by leadership from the Barue royal family and network of spirit medium claiming sacred medicines creating immunity from European bullets, the entire colonial administrative

network throughout the southern zones of the Zambezi valley had been dismantled. (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:67)

There were even instances of social banditry such as that of the legendary Mapondera, a local chief who fled arrest and operated a band of 100 on the border of Mozambique with southern Rhodesia, protecting the local peasantry from both Rhodesian and Portuguese tax collectors and labour recruiters.

One of the most dramatic expressions of active resistance found in confidential memos in the archives of the Cotton Institute was a strike action carried out by women against forced cultivation. Seven thousand women organized a strike at Buzi in Sofala province in 1947 and refused to accept the cotton seeds the administrator had ordered to be distributed. They protested that with their men working on nearby sugar plantations, they had neither the time nor the labour to produce both cotton and food. According to the archives of the Beira delegation of the Cotton Institute, the local administrator offered in response an exemption from cotton production to pregnant women and women with more than four children! (Isaacman and Isaacman 1983:67)

Cultural forms of resistance were common in the rural areas, including songs and sculpture. In the northern areas, the strong presence of the Catholic church made its impact on local carving traditions. The striking ebony characterizations of the spirit world of Makonde mythology and religion gave way to lifeless and stereotyped carvings of religious themes. At times, however, elements of doubt or defiance were introduced. The madonna is given a demon to hold instead of the Christ child. A priest is carved with the feet of a wild animal. (Mondlane 1983:104)

The Chope, located in Inhambane province, developed songs of protest like this one.

We are still angry; it's always the same story  
The oldest daughters must pay the tax  
Natancle tells the white man to leave him alone  
Natancle tells the white man to leave me be  
You, the elders must discuss our affairs  
For the man the whites appointed is the son of a nobody  
The Chope have lost the right to their own land  
Let me tell you about it.

(Quoted in Mondlane 1983:183)

Workers in the Sena Sugar Estates in Zambezia composed work songs to voice their protests against brutal overseers. The embodiment of their rage in sexual terms is a striking characteristic of many of their songs.

You are making us suffer  
 Beating me up  
 You, beating me up  
 You, Mr. balls owner  
 Your penis  
 You are making us suffer for nothing  
 Me, working for nothing We've seen hardship with the sugar  
 Look we're getting just two hundred only  
 Getting three small cruzados only, your penis.

(Quoted in Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:69)

Rural women left behind by the migrant labourers also used cultural forms to voice their protest. Their work songs capture the experience of abandonment, vulnerability to the vagaries of in-laws, and the re-organization of production necessitated by absent male labour. One work song recorded by Alpheus Manghezi of the Center of African Studies at Eduardo Mondlane University as part of a larger project on migrant labour speaks to the suffering of the newly married women left when her husband went off to the mines on "Joni". She must endure a small hut, with leaky roof in a treeless open space and the daily beatings and insults from her in-laws.

*Leader:* Oh! oh on the flat bare place  
*Chorus:* Stay there/remain there  
*Leader:* Even if they leave me there  
*Chorus:* Stay there/remain there  
*Leader:* With the rains falling on me  
*Chorus:* Remain there!  
*Leader:* Even when they insult me/swear at me  
*Chorus:* Remain there!  
*Leader:* Even if they hit me/beat me up  
*Chorus:* Remain there!  
*Leader:* Even if they kick me  
*Chorus:* Remain there!  
*Leader:* Even if they bewitch me  
*Chorus:* Remain there!  
*Leader:* Even if they throw me out  
*Chorus:* Remain there!  
*Leader:* Oh! oh that flat bare place!  
*Chorus:* Remain there!

"A Voz do Mineiro" in Estudos Africanos (1) 1980



Not all the women left behind were so long suffering. Another work song with the repeated chorus "Heyoo! Maghalangu" is a back and forth dialogue between the departing men and the women. Maghalangu is the local representative of the labour recruitment organization, WENELA (Witwatersrand Native Labour Association). The dialogue consists of banter back and forth. There are cautions to drive carefully to Joni so that the food for the trip won't spill, reminders by a wife to her departing husband not to forget to bring back pants for his son, and admonitions by a miner to his wife to take good care of his fields and crops. Fears are raised – of Maghalangu taking away the village's sons to get killed in Joni, and of miners returning from Joni to find that their wives have run off with other men.

The protest in the urban areas took different forms and was carried forward by different social groups. Two of its most visible forms were labour protests and writings by urban intellectuals, both as journalists and poets. These actions increased significantly in the period from 1910 to 1928, when the monarchy in Portugal gave way to a Republican regime<sup>11</sup>.

Various newspapers were published during this period, the most influential and long standing being *O Africano* (*The African*), published from 1908-1918 and its successor *O Brado Africano* (*The African Cry*), which began in 1918 and continued until its suspension in 1932. They were published in Portuguese and Ronga, a reflection of urban migration patterns to the national capital and the predominance of Ronga speaking southerners. These newspapers gave voice to the leading families of African and mulatto society. The most well known journalists writing in them were the Albasini brothers. Their father was a Portuguese ivory trader, whose African wife was the daughter of the Maxaquene "regulo". The father's brother became the Portuguese Vice-Consul in the Transvaal Republic. The relatively privileged position of the Albasini brothers did not prevent them from speaking for all African people, and they regularly used their journalistic voice to denounce the abuses of colonialism. Their news stories and commentaries highlighted four abuses – "chibalo", working conditions for "free" labour, preferential treatment for white immigrants and the discrimination in educational opportunities for Africans.

Albasini had a sharp eye for the contradictions of colonial life. His urban location following the flow of goods and people in and out of the colony brought a sharp critique of the distance between the high flown rhetoric of civilizing missions and the miserable life of the poverty-stricken Portuguese settlers who came to the colonies. Not for Mozambique the traditions of impeccable colonial administrators groomed in "Oxbridge" traditions. Portugal's own backwardness made it a problematic representative of the



continental "civilizing mission" – and the sharp eyes of the black press was not slow in pointing this out.

The common Portuguese, who is known as *mumadji* among the African population, always leaves Portugal with the fixed intention of a short stay in the land of the blacks to gather enough savings, and then to escape it all to return to Portugal, settle in and enjoy the wealth which he managed to accumulate, with God knows what sacrifices over two, three or four years.

Are they aware there [in Portugal], of the deprivations that these men suffer in order to save that 300 or 400, 000 reis? It is a poem of pain and misery. A veritable madness that some of them live through in an effort to fill their suitcases – with those paltry pieces of metal. Gold Fever!

They live in pigsties, without light, without air, some four or five together in order to cut costs. They customarily eat three persons from the same meal, because it costs less. In a squalid diner, soups or stews, which are more accurately puddles of warm water in which some five beans swim hopelessly in search of company . . . These beans, whose horny consistency breaks the teeth of unsuspecting countrymen, force the stomach which ingests them to turn somersaults and to cry without hope.

There they know nothing of what a driven spirit is capable of doing in the mania to make some money!

(Quoted in Penvenne 1979a:7)

Such voices were silenced effectively after 1926 with the coming to power of Antonio Salazar.

Urban labour protest was also a regular form of resistance to the efforts to impose a new economic order and ethos in the colony. It manifested itself both through action and cultural expression, in forms embedded in a complex organization of production through relations of class, race/ethnicity and gender. As Jeanne Penvenne's studies on urban workers in Lourenco Marques from the beginning of the century until independence (Penvenne:1979 a,b) so richly document, there is no such thing as the Portuguese over against the African. There is instead a tremendous fluidity and diversity of social relations that include interactions between different groups of workers including female workers from the settler community, Asians of Indian or Goan origin and non-Portuguese whites. Penvenne documents a complex and shifting pecking order with moments of competition during economic crises between various groupings. These included tensions between the Portuguese and Indian artisans, merchants and skilled and semi-skilled labourers, vying against each other for economic opportunities. There was much negative

propaganda against the Asians by the Portuguese, labelling them as conniving and intent on tricking the Africans although one suspects the greater flexibility and adaptability of the Indians in learning African languages etc. was at the root of these resentments. There were also tensions between Asians and the Africans over jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities. There were campaigns against Goans in the civil service, since they tended to fill the junior level bureaucratic positions the Africans had to contend with first. There was resentment that the Goans received settler privileges like getting part of their payment in gold. There were also moments when "assimilados" campaigned to get European women out of the civil service and retail sales positions that they wanted for themselves. At a certain moment, the male settler community also joined in this move to relegate women to the home. (Penvenne 1979a:11)

The first efforts of black workers to organize can be dated in 1911, a year after the Republican government had come into power in the metropole. A General Union began to form in Lourenco Marques, meant to encompass all black workers from the lowliest porter through to the black workers in the civil service. It was short-lived, defeated by a combination of factors. Strong resistance from the colonial state and the white labour movement were two of them. Inexperience was a third. Yet another was the option for more effective protest action against the pittance wages offered in urban employment through migrant labour contracts in South Africa or Rhodesia.

Although the General Union did not succeed, there were regular albeit sporadic attempts to organize over the years, with strikes and work stoppages in different sectors as a regular occurrence. Employees of the Merchants' Association staged a work stoppage in 1913, followed by tram workers in 1917, railroad technicians in 1918 and employees at an engineering firm in 1919. From 1916-1918, several thousand domestic workers refused to comply with registration laws. (Isaacman and Isaacman: 1983; Penvenne: 1979a)

The burgeoning port of Lourenco Marques, gateway linking South Africa's expanding mining, industry and agriculture to the larger world economy, was the scene of much labour militancy by both black and white workers. Felizberto Zavala's reconstruction of the work songs to accompany coal loading in the Lourenco Marques port captures the arduousness and humiliation of work conditions.

Loku vaku lanja, lanja ka wena – lanja . . .

Maputukezi i male mi baku leyi – lanja . . .

When they say heave that shovel, shovel – heave . . .

The Portuguese live by stealing our wages – heave. . . .

(Quoted in Penvenne 1979, .cover)

Black workers were involved in seven major strikes from 1918-1921. The wave of strikes focussed on wage demands and the refusal of the shipping and forwarding company to increase African wages to keep up with the post-war inflation in the colony.

All strikes at the port followed the same broad pattern. Disgruntled workers, organized through informal grassroots networks, refused to work unless their wages were adjusted. As soon as they gathered in front of the main entrance to the port demanding better salaries and working conditions, the colonial governor sent in troops to smash the demonstration and arrest the leaders and used "chibalo" workers as strikebreakers to keep the port going. The strikes were always quickly broken, and even when the employers agreed to pay increases, they often reneged, as they did in the 1919 strike. Nevertheless, there were several port strikes in the 1920s and a number of less publicized work stoppages.

(Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:71)

White workers in the port were also militant. In 1917, a general strike of all European personnel in the ports and railways of Lourenco Marques was called and a state of siege declared on the city. Again in 1925/26, strike actions were carried out by the European workers including sabotage of the railway track, resulting later in a derailment. Brutal repression followed including placing bound strike leaders on a "phantom" train as a warning to others. Wives of the striking workers held a hunger march, carrying black flags throughout the streets of the city. They were violently dispersed by mounted troops and police.

With the overthrow of the Republican regime in 1926 and the establishment of the Salazar regime, which lasted until 1960, the rights to organize and strike were severely curtailed even for white workers. State-run syndicates replaced the trade unions. For the African workers, this increased restriction of space for labour protest had less effect, since the right to organize had not been theirs to begin with. In 1933, there was a bitter strike in protest against 10-30 percent wage decrease. The mass walk-out resulted in an agreement to rescind the cuts. Once the returned workers returned to their jobs, however, they were locked inside the port, surrounded by police, forced to unload the ships and informed that the cuts would be maintained. There were strike actions periodically during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s but the openly fascist nature of colonial rule, responding readily with brutal repression and coercion, made it difficult to sustain labour militancy. Many sought to avoid the poor working conditions for the urban work force by legally seeking contracts in neighbouring countries. Many others fled to them illegal-



*Figure 1: Contemporary woodcut of colonial exploitation, Jose Tangawizi, Mueda (Source: Egero: 1987: 51)*

ly, in the early years for employment and in the later years, to link up with the nationalist movements

Under colonialism, then, a multiplicity of institutions, forms, agencies and discourses were established that turned on a moral vision of a world divided between the civilized and the savage. The construction of the "native" was accomplished, replete with the Native Assistance code of 1921 under which a "civilized" African was described as one who could read and write Portuguese, had divested himself of all tribal customs and was regularly and gainfully employed. In addition to the many other arbitrary categorizations and indignities which locked Africans into place as uncivilized, deficiency in mastery of the language imposed by the colonizer was, by law, a reason to be denied the status of citizen. "Illiteracy" had become a fundamental element in classifying Africans as "indigenous". The system of state provided schooling to which we shall now turn was a key institution, more in its power to hold this ideological construct into place than in its capacity to provide education to the African population.

## CHAPTER 3

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# *"Schooling" – path from indigenous to assimilated?*

Rudimentary primary schooling is designed to civilize and nationalize the indigenous people of the colony, spreading the Portuguese language and Portuguese customs among them.

Legislative Diploma 238, Article 7, 1930  
(Quoted in Hedges 1982:6. My translation)

Listen to the song of Chigombe village  
It's tedious saying "bom dia" all the time  
Macarite and Babuane are in prison  
Because they didn't say "bom dia"  
They had to go to Quissico to say "bom dia"

Popular Chope song, Quissico district. Inhambane province  
(Quoted in Mondlane 1983:103)

The colonial regime made mastery of the Portuguese language one of the primary qualifications for the "native" to pass from the status of "indigenous" to that of "assimilated"<sup>1</sup>. At the same time, the totally inadequate provision of public schooling by the Portuguese colonial state made it patently obvious that there was no real commitment to creating conditions for large numbers to attain assimilation certificates. What was signalled as the path towards certified knowledge effectively served over the years as an institution to certify ignorance.

Reconstruction of the provision of schooling established under colonialism is not undertaken merely for its historic interest, although it is

truly a fascinating chapter of educational history. Its importance for this study lies in the fact that the social construction of schooling under colonialism is an important reference point for women and men engaged in adult education today. The social memory of what schooling meant under colonialism shapes the ideas brought into contemporary literacy centers, both by adults who lacked access to the limited schooling the colonial regime had on offer and those who were rejected by the colonial system as failures.

The colonial school was a powerful ideological symbol, compelling in its promise of a path out of misery and backwardness yet at the same time, provoking revulsion and alienation by its denial of Mozambican culture and history. Its language policies were among its harshest, and included employing monitors to catch and punish children who spoke their own languages rather than Portuguese within school boundaries!

Language was indeed one of the most important instruments of colonial domination, no less so under Portuguese colonialism than in the French and British colonies. The language of the colonizer abounded in discursive practices, expressions and images, all of which served to establish the “civilizing mission” and moral project of the colonizer while at the same time inculcating complexes of racial inferiority and dependency in the colonized. Chris Searle, in his extremely rich exploration of the role of language in the process of revolution in Granada, points to the centrality of linguistic imperialism.

Class is as much a part of the English language as its grammar and syntax. When the language exists and is used in the context of colonialism or neo-colonialism it has the added dimensions of violent racism and imperialist hatred, from the coloniser to the colonised, and successively from the colonised to his own people and himself. Over the past three decades, as a result of the struggle for and process of decolonisation, the truth of cultural and specifically linguistic imperialism has been put many times in Africa, America and Asia. . . .

(Searle 1984:xx)

As we have seen in Chapter 2, the colonial authorities put in place a set of discursive practices to distance the “savage” from the “civilized”, constructing the “native” whose need to be put to productive pursuits legitimized practices of forced and migrant labour. The consolidation of colonial rule resulted in profound erosion and/or destruction of the existing social organization of African producers. This included language practices, the social communication emerging from the seasonal rhythms of planting and harvesting “machambas” (farms), the daily routines and rigours of fetching water and

pounding corn, the rituals and celebrations of birth, marriage and death. However disrupted by the imposition of colonial presence, however flawed by inequalities turning on gender and age, there were language practices through which social communication flowed richly, through which experiences and feelings could be readily conveyed. These were necessarily different from the culture and language practices of the colonial governor, the district administrator and the plantation manager whose increasingly strong presence began to intrude directly on day to day life and language, and included a systematic effort to denigrate and destroy African culture and languages. Economic survival in the social organization of production shaped under colonialism included buying into this new construction of self as "native", reproduced in important ways through language.

The colonial school was a terrain on which much of this was played out. Some Africans accepted the colonial recasting of time and space, and became alienated from their own history, geography and culture, including their own mother tongues. They sent their children to school, eager that they adopt Portuguese and distance themselves from "tribal backwardness". Many others brought to schooling a desire to come to terms with the colonizer's language based on some calculation of survival needs and strategies of resistance facilitated by mastery of Portuguese.

As direct colonial control grew, so also a culture of resistance began to emerge in which language was a key factor. Communication in African languages could go on, even directly under the district administrator's and colonial overseer's gaze, as a means of asserting some measure of control, some small space for protest. The popular Chope song quoted above is case in point, where villagers from Chigombe in Inhambane province sang their anger about villagers who had been sent to prison in the district capital, Quissico, for refusing to say "good morning" in Portuguese.

Adults brought to literacy after independence, then, strong and complex histories and feelings about language. They brought scars from colonialist practices of ritual humiliation around use of Portuguese. They carried memories of popular practices of using African languages, use of their mother tongues as a way of preserving a space of respite from and resistance to colonial domination. While a few adults had deconstructed these ideas through other experiences of education in the post-independence period, many of them held the colonial ideas intact. They brought to literacy strong ideas about themselves as legitimate or illegitimate participants in particular kinds of discursive practices, of what was a language and what merely a dialect and which appropriate for use in the classroom. They had definite ideas of how to do "schooling", of what were the appropriate classroom roles for



both “teachers” and “students”. These were all part of a social learning over the years about the role of schooling in society. A reconstruction of schooling under colonialism, then, becomes important as a reference point for contemporary experiences.

Differing views emanated from Lisbon over the years about the form of schooling that should be put into place in the colonies. There were also many moments marked by strong disagreements between the views in Lisbon and those in Lourenço Marques. The Liberal regime in power in Lisbon in the latter part of the nineteenth century made efforts to establish a single system of public schooling accessible to European and African alike. Elaborate plans were made for colonial education with the idea of scattering elementary schools throughout the provinces offering reading, writing, math and Christian morality. Teachers were to be recruited locally. The provincial capitals were to have secondary schools with faculty to be sent from Portugal. A liberal vision of large-scale assimilation of the African population prevailed, in which Africans would be subject to the same laws and institutions of Portugal.

These policies, however, were typical of Portugal’s mode of governance over the years, with pretensions far in excess of what it could, in fact, produce. These schools existed only on paper, not remotely connected with what was really happening in Mozambique. In 1865, the Minister of Marine and Overseas stated with some regret that although the legislation “fulfilled an important service . . . local difficulties, negligence, and imperfect organization annulled or paralyzed its good effects”. (Quoted in Duffy 1959:257) The local difficulties included a few voices of protest at these policies from the tiny Portuguese community in the colony at the time. The strength of this protest should not be overstated, however, since there were only about 400 students in all of the colony’s primary schools in the 1870s.

Schooling as an important site of ideological contestation was evident from early times. Mouzinho de Albuquerque, a colonial official writing at the turn of the century took a view markedly at odds with the liberal currents emanating from Lisbon.

. . . the education system was nonsense and folly. Eternally preoccupied about assimilation with the metropolis, schools were scattered along the coast; even in the interior, there were schools where improvised teachers claimed to offer primary instruction to “native” children. Attendance at these schools was minimal, even when they were turned over to secular priests; the profit derived, none. But, since the arrangement resembled what Portugal had, the Liberal spirit of symmetry was satisfied. The schools were a fiction. . . . As far as I am concerned, what we have to do to educate and civilize the “indigena” is to develop his aptitude for

manual labour in a practical way and take advantage of him for the exploitation of the province.

(Quoted in Ferreira 1974:58)

By 1900, 1195 African and mulatto children attended schools, 607 of whom were in missionary schools, 146 in government schools, 412 in municipal schools and 30 in private institutions. By 1909, there were 48 primary schools for boys and 18 for girls, the great majority run by missionaries, along with some trade and agricultural schools. (Duffy 1959: 258)

With regard to mission schools, the late nineteenth century saw a predominance of "foreign", (non-Portuguese) Protestant missions carrying out activities of education and evangelization. The main missions involved were the Swiss, the American Methodists and the Anglican, many of them with links to counterparts in the neighbouring British colonies. The Protestant missions were viewed with a good deal of suspicion by the strongly Catholic colonial administration. They were suspect not just for being Protestant but also for their encouragement of literacy in Mozambican languages, and their bent towards anthropology, both seen as undermining the broader "nationalizing" project of the Portuguese in which language and assimilation were key features.

The growing presence of "foreign" Protestant missionaries in the early decades of the century reflected, in part, the general lack of money and personnel available through the Portuguese Catholic church. It was also related, however, to a particular moment of strong separation of church and state under the Republican regime which came into power in 1911 and ruled until 1926. During the fifteen years of the Portuguese Republic support for Catholic expansion was ruled out. These years were not easy ones for Catholic missionaries. Lisbon banned Catholic missions in the colonies from 1911-1919. Their promised replacement with lay mission schools, did not materialize and so in 1919, the Catholic missions were allowed to resume their work.

The Portuguese Catholic church expanded its missions considerably in the 1920s, although they were still subject to administrative harassments from Republican minded officials. Brito Camacho, High Commissioner in Mozambique in the 1920s, made public accusations against the priests accusing them of selling themselves and making ridiculous teachers, vowing that he would never give the assistance of his government to a mission programme which did no more than catechize the Africans. Camacho found that no one in Mozambique took education of the African with any seriousness. The municipal schools, back country schools and trade schools in the colony were empty and the teachers totally incompetent. (Duffy 1959:114, 259)

Writing later on the period, Brito Camacho in his book *Blacks and Whites* included this anecdote of a visit to a mission school outside of Lourenço Marques.

The priest who says Mass is the same one who teaches school, and it seems to me that God fated him for neither of these jobs. I attended a class to see how it was taught. The first thing the teacher asked one of the little black students was "What are 'palavras esdrúxulas' [words accented on the antepenultimate syllable]?" When the little boy did not answer, he asked him another question, "What are polysyllabic words?"

I told the teacher that if this was the way he taught the black boys, they would easily come to know as much as the professor, but they would never know enough to start down the road of life.

(Quoted in Duffy 1959:368)

The report made by the African Education Commission set up under the auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund and the foreign mission societies of North American and Europe also had little positive to say about Portuguese educational policy. Commission members visited Angola in 1921 and Mozambique in 1924. The Commission noted the hostility to Protestant missions, the practice of excluding African languages from the schools, the levels of apathy and misunderstanding in provincial government circles, the lack of funds, and the absence of plans to encourage training for African teachers. It concluded that not only was the present state of education in Angola and Mozambique very backward in comparison with that of its neighbours, but also that there was "practically no basis for hope of any essential improvement of colonial policy". (Quoted in Duffy 1959:259)

The coming to power of Salazar in Portugal in 1926, and the establishment of a fascist regime in the metropolis brought changes in the colonial policies. The Salazar regime took up the anti-liberal stance of earlier colonial officials, like Antonio Enes and Mouzinho de Albuquerque and established a set of institutions, laws and agencies to create a strong separation between the "civilized" and the "indigenous". Under Salazar, "assimilation" was to be a very slow and highly selective process.

In Mozambique and Angola, a more formalized "Regime do Indigenato" or "native" status was established. As we have seen above, this classification set out a series of state regulated racial and ethnic distinctions that bound Africans into subordinate positions as "indigenous". Those classified as "indigenous" had to carry an identity card at all times, and were subject to a series of regulations that formed part of the new regime. These included forced labour obligations, subjection to customary law, residential restrictions

to non-European areas, restrictions on movement to cinemas, bars and shops, and exclusion from certain areas after dark. (Mondlane 1983:41)

The regulation of labour was done mainly through the Portuguese variant of a pass-book. The "caderneta", to be presented on demand to officials by all "natives", contained the tax record and labour record of the African male, along with the names of his wives and children. In the event of the bearer's disappearance, wives and children were liable for payment of the annual taxes. Photographs and fingerprint identification were also included. The "caderneta" also included the bearer's legal place of residence. Appropriate authorization and stamps from the local administrator were required for moving from one part of the country to another. All aspects of the "caderneta" were subject to the arbitrary exercise of power of local level authorities. If papers were lost or found not to be in order, beating, jail or correctional labour were commonplace. Through this mechanism alone, all African males were forced to keep in close contact with the colonial administration.

The strength and arbitrariness of this control of African labour necessitated an equally strong ideological project to try to hold it in place. A new "Estatuto politico civil e criminal dos indigenas das colonias de Angola e Mocambique" was drawn up by colonial minister Joao Belo in 1926. The Statute of 1926 was followed by another very similar statute which was made law by a decree in 1929. This legislation along with the general principles outlined in the Colonial Act and several other pieces of legislation on overseas administration passed in 1933 established basic Portuguese colonial policy until the 1950s.

The principles running through these pieces of legislation were clear. The goal of Portuguese colonial policy was to integrate the native peoples into the Portuguese nation. This had to be done prudently and selectively, bearing in mind that the natives had a culture, social organization and law of their own, albeit primitive in relation to the glories of Portuguese civilization. Part of the obligation of the state was to protect the Africans in their primitive state against abuses and control of the settlers, to protect their property and supervise their labour contracts with the non-indigenous. The project of assimilation consisted of gradual acquisition of a "civilized" way of life through language, education, instruction and Christianity. Once "civilized", the "indigenous" became eligible for the judicial rights and privileges of Portuguese citizenship. (Duffy 1959:294)

The construction of "civilized" and "indigenous" under Salazar can be likened to the period in western Europe in which those in power signalled a division of social space between two distinct groups. There was "Society", a small social world of shared kinship, service and values, self-defined with a

shared moral code of etiquette, dress, address and manners. Outside of “Society”, there were “les autres”, the black people. (Elias:1939)

For blacks, access to “Civilization” was restricted. Eligibility was limited to the tiny handful of Africans and mulattos who had learned to read and write Portuguese, were prepared to give up the rights and customs of the “black race”, including polygamy, and were employed within the capitalist economy. A school certificate became a fundamental criteria for entry.

According to Silva Cunha, colonial theorist and scholar, two dominant ideas prevailed in the new legislation.

One of these is to guarantee the natural and unconditional rights of the “native” whose tutelage is confided to us . . . and to assure the gradual fulfillment of his moral and legal obligations to work, to be educated, and to improve himself . . . The other is to lead the natives, by the means appropriate to their rudimentary civilization – so that the transformation from their own customs and their own habits may be gentle and gradual – to the profitable development of their own activities and to their integration into the life of the colony, which is an extension of the mother country. The natives are not granted, because of the lack of practical application, the rights associated with our own constitutional life, if it may be called that, our political laws, our administrative, civil, commercial, and penal codes, our judicial system. We maintain for them a juridical system consistent with the state of their faculties, their primitive mentality, their feelings, their way of life, but at the same time we continue to encourage them constantly, by all appropriate means, to raise their level of existence.

(Quoted in Duffy 1959:293)

Under the “Regime do Indigenato”, citizenship for whites was automatic, although many of them would have been disqualified if the same criteria applied to the African population had been applied to the Portuguese settlers. Colonial literacy figures for Angola as late as 1966 indicate 90 percent illiteracy for Africans and 40 percent illiteracy for the settlers from Portugal! (Ferreira 1974:43) Mozambicans recount wryly how colonial settlers in Gaza province in the 1950s arrived with their shoes on the wrong feet. (Vieira 1979:11) Clearly the transformation of illiterate barefoot peasant immigrants from rural Portugal into models of civilization playing their designated roles as part of “Society” was not easy to accomplish.

The moment when the Salazar regime established a state sponsored schooling system in the colony was one of much contestation about education. As with most social policies, the schooling policy did not appear in a void but in response to a specific situation of contestation that needed containment. In the period at the beginning of the century, schooling’s power for liberation

was recognized, both by colonizer and colonized. Portugal's claims to a civilizing mission were not unchallenged, and those with access to education were amongst the most vociferous in questioning their legitimacy.

By 1928, concern about the expectations created by education had been raised in a study on the labour force in Homoine district of Inhambane province in southern Mozambique. Too much access to schooling was seen as dangerous, creating expectations that could not be met.

In the province of Mozambique. . . . we continue to make the usual mistake the old system of assimilation. Because of this, there is already a super abundance of schooled natives in all the districts – the assimilated – who, since they are not all able to get a response to their demand for the right to be considered educated and nominated for a public position, are already trying to organize into class groupings and found newspapers to attack the duly constituted powers. Not far away is the demand for the right to carry out nationalist political propaganda, attacking and injuring the European race, similarly to what has happened and is growing in our neighbouring English colonies.

(Quoted in Hedges 1982:5; my translation)

The climate of contestation around education was even more pronounced in the urban areas. The work of Jeanne Penvenne (Penvenne:1979a) exploring African attitudes towards race and work in Lourenco Marques throughout this century indicates lively debate in the first quarter of the century among urban, educated Africans about Portugal's claims to a civilizing and colonizing missions, and indeed about Portugal's education policies. According to her informants and her study of the African press during this period, educated African and mulatto families in the urban areas at the turn of the century had great disdain for the Portuguese settlers, whom they referred to as "mumadji", perhaps most aptly translated as "poor white trash". Penvenne concludes that the African population saw the Portuguese institutions and forms for carrying out its "civilizing" mission as crude and ineffective compared to those carried out through the British/South Africa connection. Penvenne quotes from the most articulate African voices, those of the newspapers *The African* and later its successor, *The African Cry*, both of which were published in both Portuguese and Ronga (the predominant language of the three southern provinces). These papers compared British and Portuguese activities in the colonies, favouring the British/South African policies over against those of the Portuguese, who were seen to live off the backs of the black population. The British hired labour; the Portuguese conscripted theirs. The veterinarians organizing the cattle dips and the migrant labour recruiters organizing jobs in



the mines, all of British origin, were seen as directly beneficial to the population. The Portuguese were seen to be merely collectors of taxes. Any material benefits they organized accrued only to the settler population.

The inability of the Portuguese to speak Mozambican languages is one of the points of difference and criticism upon which there is much comment. The Portuguese missionaries and health personnel were ignorant of African languages, while personnel of the two most prominent foreign missions and the already well-established labour recruitment organization, WENELA (Witwatersrand Native Labour Association) were fluent in local languages. In Maputo, the mission hospitals were sought out over the state run hospitals, since in the mission hospitals, everyone from the receptionist to the surgeon spoke Ronga. (Penvenne 1979a:16) Penvenne's interviews with older workers reflecting back on colonial times include references to the pain and shame of reprimands in schools and workplaces for speaking what the Portuguese referred to as the "language of the dogs". The Mozambicans were very aware that the powerful owners of the mines in South Africa did not find it demeaning to converse with their employees in *fanakalo* or *lolo*, the Lourenço Marques names for the conglomerate *lingua franca* of the mining industry.

The question of whether or not it was demeaning for South African or Rhodesian mine managers to converse in *fanakalo* and what the establishment of *fanakalo* as a *lingua franca* really accomplished bears much scrutiny. Charles van Onselen in his study of mine labour in what was Rhodesia quotes the opinion of one early observer of Rhodesia on the virtues of *fanakalo*.

The jargon – it cannot be dignified with the name of language – in general used in the mines is "Kitchen Kaffir", a villainous mixture of bad Dutch and worse Zulu interspersed with English oaths; the unfortunate "native" is supposed to understand this and he is frequently abused for "not knowing his own language"!

(Quoted in van Onselen 1980:152)

Van Onselen goes on to make his own trenchant criticism, much at odds with Penvenne's informant who experienced it as a farsighted policy on the part of the British and South Africans compared to Portugal's rigid insistence on Portuguese.

The colonised status of compound inhabitants was continuously reinforced in a thousand insidious ways. Daily life was even regulated by a system of communication which denied the workers any independence, coherence, maturity or comprehension: . . . the language used was the industrial "lingua franca, *fanakalo*" which dominated the mining in-

dustries in southern Africa and this bastard tongue lay at the base of much of the friction and violence in the compounds. . . .

The effects on blacks of the disorientation induced by the use of this strange and inadequate "language", and the combination of demoralisation and resentment aroused by on-going colonisation in the compounds and the regime of violence there, were to do much to mould the natures of African response within the whole industrial setting of central Africa. (van Onselen 1980:152)

Certainly amongst the tiny urban population of educated black and mulatto families, the British and South African presence in Lourenco Marques served to highlight the backwardness of the Portuguese and the crudeness of their forms of governing<sup>2</sup>. Assimilation was a status severely discredited, since it so evidently meant, at best, only second-class citizenship. There were regular newspaper articles denouncing assimilated status as demeaning to the African and fraudulent, since the rights and privileges it was meant to guarantee were still subject to the colonial authorities' whim. (Penvenne:1979a)

The work of the Salazar regime to reorganize time and space in a way that established a world of the "civilized", separate in every respect from the world of the "savage", became the more imperative as voices contesting the colonial regime and its claim to rule emerged more strongly. One of the last public voices querying Portugal's colonizing mission was that of the African press, before it was censored out of existence. *O Brado Africano* published a ringing editorial in 1932 entitled "Enough" which shows clearly how urban, educated Mozambicans perceived their situation vis-a-vis colonial claims of civilizing missions.

We are fed up to the teeth.

Fed up with supporting you, with suffering the terrible consequences of your follies, your demands with the squandering misuse of your authority.

We can no longer stand the pernicious effects of your political and administrative decisions.

We are no longer willing to make greater and greater useless sacrifices . . .

Enough . . .

We want you to manifest, not by laws and decrees, but by deeds, your elementary obligations.

We want to be treated as you treat yourself.

We do not want the comforts with which you have surrounded yourselves at the cost of our sweat.



We do not want your refined education . . . since we do not want a life dominated by the idea of robbing our fellow men . . . We prefer our savage state, which fills your mouths and your pockets.

But we do want something . . .

We want bread, we want light. . . .

We don't want to pay for services which are of no use to us . . . for institutions whose benefits we never feel . . .

We no longer want to suffer the bottomless pit of your excellent colonial administration!

We want of you a more humane policy . . .

We repeat that we don't want hunger, nor thirst, nor disease, nor discriminatory laws founded on the difference of colour.

We have the scalpel ready.

We shall dissect your work . . .

We are daring, the result of ignorance.

We shall learn how to use the scalpel . . .

The gangrene you spread will infect us and later we will not have the strength to act. Now we do . . . It is the instinct for self-preservation. We are beasts of burden and like them we possess it . . .

Enough, gentlemen. Change your ways. There still is time.

(Quoted in Duffy 1959:306)

Amidst the climate of social unrest underlying these sentiments, clearly an institution of containment was necessary, one that could regulate social identity in a way that located Africans firmly within the orbit of Portuguese time, space and culture. State provided schooling was seen as the answer<sup>3</sup>.

### *Schooling for the "indigenous"*

After 1930, a much more rigorous policy of education and assimilation was established by the Salazar regime, including state sponsored schooling. The colonial regime's project of establishing assimilado status as something to be coveted, African incapacity to attain it as the problem and schooling as the solution is perhaps best understood as a project of social control. It was an ideological project, aimed at the reproduction of social classes of ruler and subordinated and at the same time a containment of the climate of contestation and unrest that the pre-Salazar period had unleashed.

A more classic colonial relationship with the Portuguese metropolis and the, by then, consolidating Portuguese bourgeoisie was part of Salazar's project, and this necessitated an education policy not only to control the

African labour force but to groom the colonizers. There was a necessity to reproduce through education a settler class with the necessary skills and attitudes to govern and exploit the colony effectively, and a "people" ready to accept their claims to governance. Thus one strand of the education policy was that of a formal separation between schools for the settler's children and schools for the "indigenous", to establish more clearly distinctions between rulers and ruled.

The recommendations of education officials concerning public schooling were published in Lourenco Marques in *Schooling Annual, 1930*. These recommendations tackle both the question of separate systems for black and white and the keenly felt issue of control over the missions schools, still at this time predominantly in Protestant hands and deemed to be offering education of the wrong type and in the wrong languages.

The increase in the "civilized" population of the Colony, particularly in Lourenco Marques, demanding an increasingly marked separation between the teaching for "indigenous" and "civilized" children, for the benefit of both, and the need to regulate the teaching carried out by the religious missions, gave birth . . . to all of the "indigenous" schooling in the Colony.

(Quoted in Hedges 1982:5,6. My translation.)

A public schooling system operated by the state was established. This was designed for the children of the settlers and duplicated the primary and secondary schooling systems operating in Portugal itself. The schools were directed by the Ministry of National Education in Lisbon, which included within it a Department of Overseas Education.

Enrollment was extremely small until the 1950s, when a massive influx of settlers from Portugal arrived. There was a 30 percent enrollment increase between 1954 and 1956 alone (Duffy 1959:314), with enrollment more than tripling over the ten year period between 1954 and 1964. These government elementary schools were open only to assimilated Africans. Even as late as 1954, there were only 322 Africans enrolled in the government primary schools. (Duffy 1959:314)

By 1954, the public schooling system provided by the state included 71 primary schools, 12 elementary professional schools (a craft school offered as a perk to the sons of the "regulos"), two government technical schools, one government high school and no government teacher training institutions. (Duffy 1959:314)

**Table 1: Primary school enrollment 1934-1974**

	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	MISSION (PROTESTANT)	MISSION (ROM. CATH.)	TOTAL
1934	3,505	372	493	49,263	53,633
1944	4,019	862	4,149	102,953	111,983
1945	8,683	1,130	6,797	220,799	237,389
1964	27,904	2,451	14,370	373,587	418,312
1974	623,771	13,053			636,824

*Source: Adapted from Ministry of Education and Culture (INDE). 1980. Education Systems in Mozambique. (Quoted in Marshall 1985:162)*

The system of schooling that emerged under the Salazar regime was organized in such a way as to deny more access than it created and fail more students than it passed. Each of its three stages eliminated almost the entire group of students who entered, sending them back to the families and communities that had sacrificed so much to place them in school as certified failures. The first stage was a three year system of rudimentary education for Africans. According to the first article of Legislative Diploma 238 of 1930, the rudimentary stage had as its objective "gradually to lead the "indigenous" from savage life to civilization . . . making him conscious of himself as a Portuguese citizen and preparing him for life's battles, making him more useful to society and to himself". (Quoted in Hedges 1982:6) The 1930 legislation also laid down the precise curriculum for African education. Article 8 outlines its contents. They were to include:

- a. Portuguese language
  - b. arithmetic and the metric system
  - c. history and geography of Portugal
  - d. design and manual work
  - e. physical education and hygiene
  - f. moral education and choral music
- (Hedges 1982:6)

Specific instruction for geography and history teachers about how to teach were contained in the syllabus laid out in the *Schooling Annual* of the same year.

Both the choice of history themes and the explanations given by the teacher must bear in mind the creation in the pupils of love for Portugal and legitimate pride in having been born in Portuguese territory.

(Quoted in Hedges 1982:6; my translation)

The new system of rudimentary schooling was compulsory for all African children between the ages of seven and ten living within a three kilometre radius of a school. The number of schools expanded fairly rapidly, according to official statistics, with 154 primary schools in place in 1940, each with one partially trained teacher. (Hedges 1982:7)

The system for Africans included three levels of rudimentary schooling comprised of "initiation", first class and second class. For those who successfully completed second class, it was possible to enter the primary schooling system comprised of third class, fourth class and "admission". The "admission" programme was geared to secondary school entrance requirements. Successful completion of this six year programme allowed entry into the *liceu* or secondary school. Maximum age for entry into the *liceu* was 13. For Europeans and "assimilated", there was a four year programme (as of 1962, five) for entry into secondary school. The secondary school programme consisted of three cycles for a total of seven years, in preparation for university entrance.

For African students, the administrative hurdles to attain these educational levels were enormous. In addition to being forced to learn a foreign language, there were age restrictions for entry into each level. Many African children began to study when they were already eight or nine. Schools were few, and at times too distant for younger children to reach on foot. Financial resources were scarce to buy the clothing necessary to send children to school. The few children who successfully completed the primary school programme were ruled ineligible for secondary schooling because of age restrictions.

If the barriers because of age restriction were not enough, there were, in fact, many others. For a peasant family immersed in the village level social relations so thoroughly regulated by the colonial regime, it was not just a question of having the financial means. Preferential treatment was given to the children of the "regulo" and other "traditional" leaders now functioning as local level functionaries of the colonial state. Talking with workers 35 years later about their experiences of primary schooling in rural districts in the fifties inevitably includes a fresh flare of resentment about this injustice. Cristina Mavale, a 42 year old unskilled worker at CIM, had this to say:

My father died when I was a child. After, I stayed with my grandparents. Senhora Judith knows how it was, eh? In those days, when it came time to study, it was the son of the "regulo" who went. . . .

(Interview with Cristina Mavale, March 1986)

This is not to in any way understate the fact that schooling posed a financial burden that effectively ruled it out for many parents. A child in school meant expenses for clothing and footwear. It also meant a loss in family labour power, since children played important roles in tending cattle, fetching water and minding smaller children, all crucial tasks in family economies where the male was absent more often than not, doing either forced or contract labour.

It wasn't a question of not wanting to study in colonial times. It was a question of power – parents who were able to put their children in school. Everybody wanted schooling but not everybody had the means.

(Interview with Leonor Benjamim, February, 1986)

The policy decision on language of instruction created another huge administrative barrier. No account was taken of the need to learn the language of instruction, Portuguese, as a prerequisite for learning other subject matter. The total arbitrariness of this policy was evident. Ostensibly the rudimentary schooling programme was designed to introduce children to Portuguese. Nonetheless, in rural areas, mulatto and Asian children brought up speaking Portuguese as a first language were also placed in the rudimentary schools. In other areas, children of Asian or non-Portuguese European parents for whom Portuguese was a second language were allowed to start in the state primary schools. (Mondlane 1983:63)

For children of rural families who knew no Portuguese, there was no pretense of a programme to learn the language of instruction before tackling history, geography etc. Teaching was carried out entirely in Portuguese with the exception of the catechism which could be taught in the mother tongue of the children. Given the difficulties suffered by the inadequately trained teachers in trying to teach the various disciplines in a language not spoken by the children, many neglected the syllabus and contented themselves with filling classroom time with rote learning of the catechism in the vernacular as a substitute. As one woman reflecting back on it put it:

I went to school up to second class. There was a lot of doctrine and not much math and Portuguese at the Cambine Mission. There was also a lot of work growing maize, peanuts and cassava to buy school materials.

(Interview with Clementina Oficio, February 1986)

For those few African students who did manage to enter primary schools, the administrative barriers for going on to secondary schooling were, if anything, more effective still. Few were the missions schools that even offered the fifth year programme in preparation for secondary school. Fewer still were the parents who could send their children to the city and pay for them to attend a private school in preparation for secondary schooling.

The financial burden for the parents of the few African children in secondary schools were very great. The lower secondary schools were all in towns, necessitating transport and board for parents in rural areas. There were only three upper secondary schools, one in Beira and two in Lourenco Marques. In some cases, Protestant missions arranged for student hostels in these cities in which pupils from the rural areas could board.

If African children in general were subjected to these multiple hurdles militating against educational success, the girls had yet more hurdles placed in front of them. On the one hand, the social construction of appropriate roles for women established traditionally (and in no way challenged by the roles undertaken by women in settler society) meant that families themselves ruled out schooling for their daughters. Few girls even got as far as the classroom door. Striking in the interviews with women doing adult basic education today was the pattern in the 1950s of the boys in the family having completed three or four years of primary schooling while the girls remained illiterate.

For those girls who did make it to the classroom, the opportunity to learn was still often out of reach because of gender. Women today recalling their schooling experiences in the 1950s speak of inordinate amounts of time spent doing tasks for the teachers such as cooking and cleaning in the teacher's house. Alicinda Macuacua, an unskilled worker who packages pasta in a Maputo factory, remained illiterate as a child, along with her three sisters, while her brother completed lower primary schooling. She recalled her experiences in the district school in this way:

The girls who were sent to school were made to collect firewood and cultivate the fields. Only the boys were allowed to study. This was in the Santa Maria Mission.

(Interview with Alicinda Macuacua, July 1985)

### *Schooling and the Roman Catholic Church*

A key aspect of the education policy under Salazar was the central role played by the Roman Catholic church in education. Basically, education for the African population was provided not by the state directly but through the Catholic missions. The churches were seen as key in the civilizing mission

with increasingly close collaboration between church and state established by legislation. Already in the Constitution of 1933, overseas Catholic missions and their training institutions were guaranteed protection and assistance from the state, recognizing them as "institutions of education, of assistance, and instruments of civilization". (Hedges 1982:7. My translation).

The privileged status already enjoyed by the Catholic missions after the accession to power of Salazar was formalized and institutionalized in the concordat signed with the Vatican in 1940. An annexed missionary accord was incorporated in the 1941 Missionary Statute, article 66, which entrusted all education intended for natives to missionary personnel and their auxiliaries. The two-fold objectives of education were clear:

The aim of these plans and programmes shall be to make the "native" population national and moral, and to inculcate such work habits and skills for each sex as suit the conditions and requirements of the regional economies; moral education shall aim at curing laziness and preparing future rural workers and craftsmen to produce what they need to satisfy their own requirements and their social obligations. The education of the "indigenous" population shall thus be essentially nationalist and practical, the "native" then being able to gain a living for himself and his family; and it shall take due account of the social conditions and psychology of the populations for whom it is intended.

(Quoted in Ferreira 1974:67)

Thus education was to turn the African into a "true Portuguese", ready to accept Portuguese rule, and to train good agricultural workers and craftsmen useful to the colonial economy. There was much stress on the pomp and circumstance of nationhood and an almost mystical reiteration of Portugal's vocation as civilizer, its mission to the land of the discoveries. The schools were the vehicle par excellence to inculcate this sense of identity with the glory of the Portuguese empire. They worked to create a social identity, a locating of the African within time and space measured against the hallowed rights of being a "citizen", with the larger "nation".

The educational policies and practices established in the colonies are not to be wondered at when one considers what was happening within metropolitan Portugal itself<sup>4</sup>. The "estado Novo" (New State) established by the 1933 Constitution, shortly after Salazar's accession to power, set out guidelines for education in which there should be:

A reduction of programmes to allow for concentration on "fundamentals", an emphasis on "applied knowledge" [this meant on design and



manual work for boys and domestic activities for girls] and "all principles are to indicate ideas of country, family and the love of birthplace".

(Quoted in Stoer 1981:336)

The missions were authorized to offer schooling but the actual funds for physical expansion of the missions – for church buildings, staff housing, school classrooms, workshops and transport – were not provided by the state. Instead the colonial state sanctioned close collaboration between the missions and local state officials who made land and labour available in abundance. A variation of the system of forced labour, "chibalo" was established in the mission schools.

Pupils came to be used as a free source of labour for agricultural production, especially rice and cotton, subsequently sold to improve mission finances. This form of exploitation, a kind of forced labour extracted by the missions in the guise of payment for education – which many rural parents wanted for their children despite the difficulties and costs – came to be known as "Xipadre". (Xibalo in the mission fields.) Often parents had to supply the hoes of their children so exploited, and in addition contribute sacks of maize and beans – also supposedly in payment for the education received, but in reality a tithe of agricultural production which the mission could dispose of for profit as it saw fit. The close collaboration of church and local administration was shown in the disposal of "Xibalo" and prison labour; the Catholic missions received Xibalo for their farms, and on the other hand, allowed "recruitment" of older pupils by the administration before their dispersal home.

(Hedges 1982:9,10)

During the two decades after 1940, the Roman Catholic missions expanded dramatically. Senior figures in the church hierarchy came to receive the salaries and allowances of colonial officials. Schools and missions came to receive some financial support. Control of teacher training for the "indigenous" was entrusted to the Roman Catholic missions as well, with all preparation of teaching staff at all levels to be carried out in colleges and schools established by the Prelates in accordance with the Governor of the colony. All personnel of these training institutions were to be Portuguese.

This close collaboration between the state and the Roman Catholic church was tantamount to a frontal attack on the "foreign" missions, much suspect for the ideological content of their education over the years. The Protestant missions were seen to be too liberal, with a propensity to validate African languages and culture and generally encourage education for Africans in a way to give them a tendency to be "uppity". Such policies put them seriously

at odds with the prevailing sentiments of the new order under Salazar. These attitudes continued unabated, up to the end of colonial rule in Mozambique, as this comment by Eduardo Mondlane, first president of the Mozambique Liberation Front, FRELIMO, makes clear.

Since the seventeenth century, foreign missionaries have been suspected of “denationalizing the natives”, and of acting as advance agents for foreign governments. When these missionaries are Protestant, fears and resentments are multiplied. Consequently, for many years the Protestant missions in Mozambique have been hampered and quite often thwarted by a powerful combination of the Portuguese Catholic clergy and officials of the colonial government. From time to time, public statements are made by high officials of the colonial government attacking Protestant missions, accusing them of fomenting anti-Portuguese sentiments amongst the African population.

(Mondlane 1983:71)

In the period from 1940 to 1960, the Catholic missions expanded dramatically while the “foreign” missions were reduced. The numbers of schools in the Catholic mission system by 1954 included 1,356 rudimentary schools, 55 primary schools, 51 elementary professional schools and four teacher training institutions. (Duffy 1959:314)

*Table 2: Mission expansion 1940-1960*

	1940	1950	1960
Catholic missions	296	851	2000
Foreign missions	41	39	27

*Source: Hedges 1982:10*

### *Schooling for subordination*

Whether measured by the numbers of African students actually in the system, pass rates, or success in moving on to the next level, the results show a system little guaranteed to make education accessible or relevant to Africans. Even by 1959, there were only 392,796 children in the schooling programme for African children, now called “Adaptation Schooling”. Of these, only 6,928

managed to start primary school. (Mondlane 1983:65) In 1960, there were only 30 African students in a student body of more than 1000 at the main secondary school in Lourenco Marques, Liceu Salazar. On the eve of independence in 1975, primary school enrollment was still only slightly over 600,000 in a population of 10.5 million.

**Table 3: Primary School Enrollments and Pass Rates 1940 – 1960**

	1940	1950	1960
Total enrollment	50,000	232,923	379,068
Passes	1,844	2,985	10,448
Percent	3.6%	1.2%	2.7%

*Source: Adapted from Hedges 1982:10*

The failure rates were staggeringly high. It would seem, then, that less than 3.5 percent of those entering rudimentary schooling actually completed it successfully. Striking is the fact that the pass rate for comparable levels in the surviving Protestant schools was 25-28 percent. (Hedges 1982:10)

What is perhaps astonishing is how oblivious the Portuguese leaders, both in church and state, were to the signs of the times. In 1960, at the same time that other African countries were gaining their independence and nationalist leaders from Mozambique had begun to group to form the Mozambique Liberation Front, the Portuguese prelate, Gouveia, was still writing pastoral letters in the tones of the 1920s.

... we intend to reach the native population extensively and in depth to teach people to read, write and count, not to make doctors of them. ... The schools are necessary, yes, but schools where the native is taught the path of human dignity and the greatness of the nation that protects him.  
(Quoted in Hedges 1982:14)

Dramatic changes were in the offing. The nationalist protest had strengthened, dramatized by the armed revolt in Angola in 1961. By 1964, three movements of Mozambican nationalists grouped in neighbouring

countries, by now independent, joined together. The Mozambique Liberation Front was formed and an armed struggle for national independence launched in 1964. The Portuguese economy was also changing greatly, opening up to foreign investment as a way to fortify against the nationalist assault, and in so doing, creating the need for a work force with new kinds of skills.

Colonial policies were also subject to review. The *Estatuto Indigena* was abolished, and with it, compliance with the Missionary Statute and the practice of educational institutions only for Africans. Primary school was made compulsory for all children between six and twelve. Secondary schools were expanded and technical schools created. Particular stress was put on agricultural education. General studies were offered from 1963 on. By 1968, the faculty of general studies was designated as a university. A faculty of economics was added in 1970. The new education policy altered its discourse marginally to make the shift from church to state sponsorship, playing down the Christianizing mission and substituting a somewhat mystified vision of Lusitanian nationhood and a multi-continental Portugal. The contents of the texts were to a degree Africanized, including images of African life in rural areas and towns. There was a stress on visual images showing harmonious relations of Africans and whites, especially in the primary grades. The glorification of Portuguese "discoveries" was already a strong theme by third and fourth grade history, however, with Portuguese ships on the textbook covers. One textbook had the title "Sails for Christ" and the other included a quotation from the Portuguese epic poet Camoes, "... and if there were more worlds they would reach them". (Quoted in Ferreira 1974:86)

The social construction of "schooling" is extremely interesting to analyze. Schooling was posed as the path out of the misery of the "indigenous status". The lived experience of daily brutality and crude exploitation at the hands of the colonial state was worked up ideologically as the "problem" of being "indigenous", of being, by nature, of an inferior race, brutish, totally lacking in culture. The "problem" of being "indigenous" could be resolved by something called "schooling". "Schooling", however, meant a special system for Africans, replete with bureaucratic and administrative categories that made it extremely difficult to succeed.

Certainly reflecting back on education under colonialism, Mozambicans were very clear about its shortcomings. Gabriel Mauricio Nantimbo, a former pupil at Inbuho mission school had this to say:

I studied at the missions, but we weren't well taught. In the first place, they taught us only what they wanted us to learn – the catechism; they didn't want us to learn other things. Then every morning we had to work

on the mission land. They said our fathers didn't pay for our food or our school things. The missions also received money from the government, and our families paid them fees. After 1958 our parents even had to buy the hoes with which we cultivated the mission land.

(Quoted in Mondlane 1983:72)

A document presented to UNESCO shortly after independence by the Mozambique Liberation Front put it succinctly:

In sum, beyond the boundaries of the areas liberated by FRELIMO, all schools were based on racism, divisionism, elitism, individualism, obscurantism and contempt for all things African. Many a Mozambican who managed to surmount the many obstacles to secondary or higher education did so at the cost of turning himself into a little black Portuguese, the docile instrument of colonialism, whose ambition was to live like a settler, in whose image he was created.

(FRELIMO: 1976)

The diplomas for successful completion of schooling within this system communicate its aims very clearly. Designed in 1937, the diplomas were still in use in 1966. The ideological project is not hard to decipher. Schooling is for male, white children, resolutely holding up the flag of the Portuguese fatherland in military posture. The Bible and the faith provide a solid foundation, the soil from which an abundance of produce, more typical of Portugal than Mozambique, can flourish. The schools, replete with the pomp and circumstance of flag-raising, the national anthem, drilling for national holidays and songs for visiting dignitaries, played a key role in shaping social identity. Schools served as an important institution in the creation of political subjects, within the larger project of state formation.

How are we to evaluate the colonial school system? Evidently it was not successful if we assume it to have been established to give mass access to knowledge and skills. Few were the African children who had access to it. The illiteracy rate at independence in 1975 was estimated at 90 percent.

Perhaps a closer look at the colonial schools in terms of regulating the labour force and having growing needs in terms of skill levels gives a slightly different picture. The missions tended to have very substantial agricultural holdings and also large workshops ranging from car repairs to carpentry and metal work. This meant that the many students who left as certified failures in terms of the literary skills evaluated in school exams and needed as a prerequisite for "assimilated" status, were, in fact, fed back into their communities with new practical skills. They could be drawn through "chibalo" to



Figure 2: Primary school diploma, Lourenço Marques, 1966. Certificate for successful completion of Class 4.

apply their skills on the plantations or on state building projects or road construction. Indeed older pupils were recruited directly from the schools to forced labour contracts. Any positive features of this are measured only from the colonial side; for the African pupil, the skill acquisition gained through "xipadre" was not recognized as a qualification for permanent work. This skilling component of schooling simply made the labour force to be drawn into forced labour a more competent one.

Perhaps the more interesting assessment of the colonial education system, however, is one that does not look for schooling to be a mechanism for individual advancement, particularly for the popular classes, but sees it as an ideological project. In many societies public schooling systems have been introduced as instruments of social control. As we have seen above, they have worked to create a social identity as "citizen" within a particular organization of time and space defined as "nation". (Corrigan, Curtis, Lanning:1983)

Schooling in these situations has proved itself an effective mechanism for both rulers and subordinated to become convinced of the appropriateness of their "station". The assessment of individual worth certified by the school comes to be accepted, given the parameters of the possible ways of speaking, thinking, doing, being defined day by day within the schools.

It would seem to be a real question whether Portuguese colonial regime was sufficiently skilled at governing to be able to establish a school system that enjoyed this kind of legitimacy from the governed. There seem to be many doubts as to whether schooling contributed positively to the ideological "glue" bonding rulers and ruled into a nation. Unfortunately the historical reconstruction that could ascertain the meaning of schooling for ordinary Mozambicans during the period in which public schooling was being introduced is very difficult to carry out.

The adults who lived through this period have now passed through a process of social revolution and look back on colonial institutions with a critical appreciation more related to contemporary events than to a genuine reconstruction of how such institutions worked on their lives forty or fifty years ago. Illiterate parents struggling to send their children to school in the 1940s and 1950s did not record in documentary forms their reactions to the role of the school in their community. There are no "home and school" archives to aid us in reconstructing. The African press which had been so vociferous in its criticisms of earlier forms of schooling was effectively silenced under the Salazar regime, and indeed we have suggested above that the advent of a public schooling system was, at least in part, meant to contain the kinds of questioning and social unrest of the first decades of the century.



The accounts from missionaries are necessarily of people involved themselves as dispensers of education. It is not simple, then, to give an account of the successes or failures of the colonial school system, much less of how Mozambicans at the time experienced the massive lack of access to it or the massive number of failures within it.

It is clear that at least for some of the urban dwellers, the project of establishing "assimilation" as desirable and schooling as the path to it never gained widespread legitimacy. The contradictions were too evident. Assimilated Africans in the urban areas were known as "pocket whites" or "paper whites" since their status depended on the paper which they had to keep on their person at all time, to be produced on demand. There were practical reasons for choosing to become assimilated, however, that had little to do with belief in Portugal's exaggerated claim to be guardian of "civilization".

From the writings of the first African to receive the so-called *alvara de assimilacao*, assimilation certificate, in 1917 to interviews with contemporary Mozambicans who filed for assimilation certificates in the years immediately preceding their abolition as part of the paper reforms of 1961-1962, it is clear that assimilation certification was sought, often grudgingly, in order to facilitate upward mobility, minimize harassment and hopefully open opportunities for one's children. The obvious inequality of having to verify one's equality with a document to be carried on one's person and presented upon demand to white authorities at all times was a sore point from the start, but the legal and economic privileges carried by the status were sufficient to convince some 700 Mozambicans in the years up to 1954 to take out assimilation papers in the Lourenco Marques courts.

(Penvenne 1979a:12)

At least some rejected out of hand Portugal's claim as gate-keeper to civilization but at the same time saw the assimilation certificate as a practical necessity for urban employment<sup>5</sup>.

I always carried the documents of a native, because I am a native. I am a Negro after all, aren't I. But after a long time I also became an *assimilado*, and like the majority of natives here what convinced me was the possibility of earning a bit more money – it was for this reason alone. . . . Those who were not *assimilados* were Negroes after all, and as such they always earned a pittance.

(Quoted in Penvenne 1979a:14)

The decision whetherto opt for the assimilation certificate or not was open to a tiny handful of urban wage workers at best. For the vast majority of people

in Mozambique, the option to become a "paper white" or not was well beyond their grasp. They were subjected to a textually-mediated forms of rule imposed on the African population which gave another kind of paper an enormous power over their lives. For Africans, the hated "cademeta" was obligatory on your person at all times even in the most remote and dispersed rural communities. It was a text that bound African producers to the colonial state as if with an umbilical cord. Through it words and texts and signatures took on a new power, with literacy linked to a world both desired and feared.

The "cademeta" created a documentary existence, transforming rural producers, tied by complex links into their own nexus of social relationships in family and community, into administrative categories of taxpayers and labour units. The redefinition of spatial boundaries was accomplished through the "cademeta". Free movement from one area to another was restricted, except with express authorization of the local administrator written into the "cademeta". The reordering of time for peasant producers was also accomplished through this textually-mediated form of rule. The "cademeta" included a record of labour activity. Family production was made invisible as a legitimate use of time, falling under the category of "idle time". The local administrator was responsible for defining and controlling time spent in "idleness". The only legitimate uses of time were time spent in contract South Africa and Rhodesia, time spent in "chibalo" or forced labour, and time spent in wage employment. The rich and complex texture of rural production and society were totally transformed through the regulation of labour accomplished through the textually mediated discourse turning on "idleness".

Both oral and written forms of literacy came to have an inordinate power over people's lives, one whose humiliating effects they could do little to control. The contract labourers in the mines were declared deficient and even punished for not knowing their own language, "fanakalo". Children arriving in schools were expected to learn in a language of instruction they had no way of knowing and which the school system did not propose to teach. Adults put thumb prints as substitutes for signatures on "cademetas" that forced them to be fugitives in their own land, going underground or into exile to escape the labour obligations forced upon them. Through all of this, the power of literacy was consolidated.

Portugal's continued readiness for heavy-handed mechanisms to coerce the governed much surpassed any repertoire of forms for winning their consent. The transparency of the coercion meant that many Mozambicans simply calculated themselves how to play the system, developing well-honed survival skills over the years. Their murmurings and resentments were

channelled to forms of cultural resistance, songs and dances in popular forms, often camouflaged in languages inaccessible to the colonizer. Others denied the legitimacy of Portugal's claims by opting out of colonial society altogether. Increasing numbers in the late sixties and early seventies escaped to neighbouring countries and joined up with FRELIMO to fight for independence. The liberated zones created in northern Mozambique became the crucible to begin to reconstruct the definitions of time and space and culture that Portuguese colonialism had tried so systematically to rob and destroy.

## CHAPTER 4

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# *Literacy, popular state and people's power*

The People's Schools emerged at the moment when the population discovered, after participating in the literacy classes, that the methods used in the centers were different from the methods used in the formal school system. . . . At the time they identified the education system in place as being colonial. The population saw that, compared with the teaching in the colonial schools, the teaching in the literacy centers was more adapted to reality, to the socio-cultural context and political moment they were living.

Interview with Henrique N'Guiraze,  
Literacy organizer, Zambezia, 1975-77

What is fundamental is that people were discussing totally new ideas. The literacy center became the nucleus for really important social interaction, and cultural activity that, in effect, marked a profound break with traditional society. It had many new aspects which were cause for both marvel and confusion. It was a moment of real ideological agitation at the base, which contributed massively to the great popularity and wide dissemination of FRELIMO's ideas. Even today this is reflected in people's language.

Interview with Jose Cardoso  
Literacy organizer, Gaza, 1975-77

With the broad literacy movement that emerged throughout Mozambique in the period immediately before and after independence came a dramatic recasting of what it meant to be illiterate. The coup in Portugal in April 1974, was followed by the Lusaka Accords in early September of that year, establishing September 25 as the date for a transitional government composed of both FRELIMO and Portuguese representatives. This marked a radical break

in the forms, both of governing and being governed. The period in preparation for national independence on June 25, 1975, was one characterized by an explosion of popular energy. The murmurings and resentments that had formerly found expression largely through cultural forms now became part of an extended public conversation throughout the country, much of it taking place in the literacy centers and "People's Schools".

The public discourse on literacy shifted dramatically. The backwardness of Portuguese colonialism was a major focus, seen in its failure to carry out any kind of socio-economic development of the colony, fostering ignorance and backwardness over the 500 years of Portuguese presence in Mozambique<sup>1</sup>. The colonial state had signalled literacy as a category of deficiency, related to a natural state as indigenous, brutish, and uncivilized. Now illiteracy took on a new meaning as a social state of deprivation, the result of a historic lack of access to education that had intentionally created ignorance in an entire people.

The watchwords of Samora Machel, president of FRELIMO, to the Mozambican people immediately after the signing of the Lusaka Accords were "Study, produce and fight". These were taken as serious marching orders in preparation for independence and a broad, popular literacy movement emerged throughout the country. Jose Cardoso, at the time a settler's son studying in a Portuguese university, was one of those who returned home to become part of the process. He became a literacy organizer in Gaza and later became head of the national literacy services in the Ministry of Education. His reflections almost fifteen years later on that moment in which he and many other young, educated, urban Mozambicans were drawn into the political process reconstruct something of the times.

Samora's speech after Lusaka was very important in galvanizing the groups of sympathizers who had emerged in various places (which led, later, to the Dynamizing Groups), above all it meant they had a contact with the political line of FRELIMO. . . . As a result of an intense phase of spreading anti-colonial ideas, there was a process of massive expansion of schooling which was, in a way, spontaneous. . . . There was an interesting problem of distrust in the official school system, seen as colonial. Linked to this was the introduction of a tendency to speak local languages in the "People's Schools".

(Interview with Jose Cardoso February 1986)

The choice by FRELIMO to launch literacy activities was entirely consistent with the experiences of FRELIMO in the liberated territories. There, mass access to education was one of the tangible forms of the new society

being built, one that touched deeply a people who, through the long decades of colonial rule, had been derided for their ignorance yet systematically prevented from access to schooling. Education in the liberated zones, then, included literacy for both children and adults. It also included rich experiences of popular education for adults. Although these have never been named as "education", they served as important reference points for action during the tumultuous days leading up to and following national independence on June 25, 1975.

### *Education during the armed struggle*

The liberation struggle itself had brought forward different needs and expectations for literacy and popular education. The various strands of Mozambican nationalism that merged to form FRELIMO in 1964 under the leadership of Eduardo Mondlane, placed a great value on education. As their plans to mount an armed struggle from neighbouring Tanzania and Zambia, into the northern provinces took shape, the need for a training programme for the liberation army loomed large. This involved not only the technical aspects of waging the war, though these themselves were demanding, especially, as the war progressed to more sophisticated weapons and logistics. More fundamental, however, was the political aspect. If the soldiers were to gain the confidence of northern villagers terrorized by colonial repression, they needed a clear understanding of what they were fighting for, who they were fighting and why. This raised basic questions about tribe, race, sex and gender, class, ideology and nation. And indeed within the movement itself, all of these questions raised themselves acutely.

Language immediately emerged as a central question. Mozambicans from different regions and language groups throughout the country fled the daily oppression and humiliation of forced labour and the "cademeta" to fight against Portuguese colonialism. The armed struggle brought them together with a new sense of national unity born of a common enemy, but they had no means of social communication. The demands of the armed struggle, from the language of instruction in training to the language of FRELIMO Congress documents to mold three nationalist movements into one all necessitated decision about language. Choice of any one Mozambican language immediately privileged that language region, marginalizing all the Mozambicans who did not speak the language chosen and thus working against the very national unity so earnestly desired. After lengthy deliberation, Portuguese, the language of the colonial oppressor, was chosen as the official language.

Reflecting back on it four years after independence in 1979, during the First National Seminar on the Teaching of the Portuguese Language, a senior FRELIMO leader recalled it as a decision thought through with care, which when it was taken was a "unanimous and tactical" decision. As he saw it, the armed struggle "putting side by side Mozambicans of different regions, with different cultures and languages of their own, was the first great factor in creating national unity". The need for a common means of social communication was paramount. The decision to opt for Portuguese was not determined by cultural traditions. "It was a tactical decision, with a perspective that the future fully confirmed as being the only correct one. . . a political decision, the result of deep thought and consideration." (Quoted in Searle 1984:4)

The option to take over the colonizer's language was a painful one, but one that did bring a number of immediate advantages.

As the operational language of the liberation war, Portuguese, gave the basis of a common military language of command and co-ordination. It allowed the liberation forces to "know the enemy better," as well as giving greater capacity to understand and apply military strategy and the technology of war. It gave FRELIMO a language to deal with certain concepts that were untranslatable in the African languages. Portuguese colonialism had not allowed the Mozambican people any real penetration into the world of science and technology. The liberation forces needed not only soldiers who were also technicians, engineers and strategists, but thinkers with the necessary skills to analyze FRELIMO's ideological foundation of Marxism-Leninism.

(Searle 1984:4)

Over the decade of armed struggle, the women and men in FRELIMO transformed the Portuguese language, making it their own. A new political culture emerged with songs, with poetry, with rituals and celebrations, with slogans like "A luta continua". Portuguese words took on new resonances unknown in metropolitan Portugal or beyond the liberated zones. One was 'responsavel', literally the one charged with responsibility for a given task, with connotations of lateral and participatory decision-making rather than hierarchical chains of command. Another word that gained currency during the armed struggle was the adjective "engajado", referring to people engaged in, caught up in, committed to the revolutionary process. Songs were written celebrating the power of the "bazooka". Poems like "When bullets begin to flower" (Dickinson (ed.):1972) captured the reality of a people's war leading to "people's power".



Words and knowledge came together in a new way. Sergio Vieira in his poem, "Four Parts of a Poem of Education Left Incomplete" puts it this way:

at night in the bases  
deciphering letters  
in the shadow of mango trees,  
spelling out words under the cry of bombs  
scribbling sentences. . .

word was made bullet  
and the bullet was guided by the word. . .

from words  
hurricanes were born  
which annihilated the companies.

With the sentences they wanted to hide from us  
we lit the great fire  
of the People's war.

(Quoted in Searle 1984:4,5)

The armed struggle rapidly created liberated areas where there was an enormous thirst for education. Just two years after the beginning of the armed struggle in Cabo Delgado province in 1964, a network of bush schools was already established. More than 10,000 children were enrolled in FRELIMO primary schools by 1967. At the end of that year, ten teachers started to work setting up schools in Niassa and soon another 2000 students were enrolled. Refugee children brought from Niassa to the Tunduru camp in Tanzania necessitated the establishment of primary schooling there, and many children were later brought from the liberated zones to Tunduru to do their upper primary schooling. (Munslow 1983:99) Secondary schooling was set up in the Mozambique Institute in Dar es Salaam. Education in fact, became a central terrain of contestation during the intense internal struggles within FRELIMO during the late 1960s<sup>2</sup>.

The conflict erupted dramatically at the Mozambique Institute in Dar es Salaam where secondary schooling had been organized in the mid 1960s as an alternative to the schooling offered at the Kurasini International Education Center (KIEC). KIEC catered to refugee students in Tanzania and offered an education totally unlinked to Mozambican realities with possibilities of scholarships abroad. The elitist notions and individual ambitions fostered by KIEC put it at odds with FRELIMO's need for future cadres to carry on a national liberation struggle.

FRELIMO looked to its new secondary school for trained cadres but the reality of the situation was that most of the students had never been to the liberated areas and distanced themselves from the armed struggle. Many sought scholarships abroad as the, logical continuation of their training. Much of this argument for not "wasting" the students in the bush life of the liberated areas but instead preparing them for future high level government posts after independence centered around Mateus Gwenjere. Gwenjere was a Roman Catholic priest who had joined FRELIMO at the end of 1967, bringing with him a group of his seminary students from Beira. Gwenjere had mobilized the students to come with the promise of scholarships and encouraged them to defy the 1966 Central Committee decision whereby high school graduates spent at least a year inside Mozambique actively participating in the struggle. He argued that those in power were afraid of creating more trained Mozambicans because it would put their own positions of leadership in jeopardy. He also fomented racism, demanding the removal of four of the Mozambique Institute's teachers and its director because they were white, and therefore "not Mozambican".

The ultimately victorious group within FRELIMO had a very different vision, which saw education fundamentally to serve the people. In line with this vision was the necessity for students to return to the liberated areas before any further study could be contemplated. The conflicts in education were intensely linked up with the deep internal struggles in the movement at this time turning on questions of whether it would simply create a nationalist party that would replace a white elite with a black elite or set in motion the more far-reaching social transformation to create structures of popular control. As a result of these conflicts came a decision to close the school for two years. The fact that the nationalist movement itself radicalized and that education issues were a key focus of these internal struggles sharpened the perception of the role of education in establishing people's power, and forced the recognition that knowledge and skill are classed, raced and gendered acquisitions.

### *Forms of popular education*

Discussions about education in the liberated areas have tended to reduce education to these new forms of state-in-embryo sponsored schooling that emerged. There were also, however, vital and dynamic educational forms that began to emerge in the communities linked to FRELIMO that are very much within the tradition of popular education<sup>4</sup> as it has emerged in other parts of the world, particularly in Latin America<sup>4</sup>. Perhaps the most important new

form of education was the weekly village "meeting" that drew together all villagers with FRELIMO leaders in a kind of community forum that was both an educational process and an experience of direct, face-to-face democracy, all in the context of dramatically changing conditions for production and defence.

The village meeting provided a new form for adults to be together and to think collectively about the transforming of their circumstances and themselves.

The pedagogy of leadership of FRELIMO at the time was one that was good at learning, and that meant being good at listening and validating peasant experiences<sup>5</sup>. It was more a pedagogy of questions than of answers. The weekly meeting in the villages of the liberated zones were often prolonged affairs, some lasting eight and ten hours. New traditions took hold, whereby at these meetings everybody spoke on a subject before any action could be taken. For villagers used to the arbitrary actions of power of the Portuguese administrative apparatus, the invitation to voice their ideas and concerns marked a radical shift. For Mozambican women and youth, the shift was doubly dramatic, since traditional forms of subordination had ruled out speaking in public for women and tightly restricted roles for youth while privileging those of the elders.

In the meetings, the ravages of colonialism in shaping people to view themselves and their worlds in distorted ways could be addressed. The weekly meeting provided the occasion for peasant women and men to begin to take apart the constructs of colonialism, the way peasant workers had been despised, blackness repudiated, tribal differences manipulated and women silenced. Eliza Sumahili, a women drawn into FRELIMO as a militant, described the changes through which she personally had gone in this way:

I gained a wide experience of speaking to men and the public in general, of communicating, and I stopped feeling afraid, which is what I felt whilst living at home. Traditionally in my village, a girl could never speak with either a man or a boy. . . . Now we discuss on equal footing.

(Quoted in Munslow 1983:145)

A process was set in motion whereby the social construction of a new reality could take place, engendering new ways of seeing, of saying, of being. The war itself created the form. Peasant women and men and children in the underdeveloped hinterlands of Cabo Delgado, Niassa and later, Tete, were the human resources available, and their willingness to support FRELIMO and endure the reprisals of the colonial state was a necessary component for the advance of the struggle. Peasant energies and initiatives and creativity were

the only resources available and the question of how to release these energies was paramount. There was no use thinking about machines, money, trained cadres, technology or infrastructure. . . the war reduced, or perhaps better said, clarified the question. Mobilizing the human resources for creating the new Mozambique was the only thing worth discussing. FRELIMO's first president, Eduardo Mondlane, pointed to these peasant energies as key.

The people are constantly encouraged to clear more land for cultivation and to grow more food, and this campaign has been so successful that, despite the hazards and upheavals of the war, more land is actually under cultivation today than there was during the colonial administration. Even after the first year of war, more food was being produced than before. Now in some areas, as at Ngazela, 80 percent of the land cultivated had not previously been productive.

The greatest impetus to production has clearly come from the abolition of the companies, and from the fact that the people now themselves profit from their work. Two other factors are also important. One is the work of the party in advising, encouraging and explaining the needs of the struggle, and in providing essential pieces of equipment like hoes and pangas. The other, linked with this, is the development of new methods of organization, principally the cooperative.

(Mondlane 1983:172)

The village meeting as educational forum set in motion a critical discourse that relocated the peasants' position of subordination, not only in relation to external domination but also to immediate experiences of exploitation. In many cases, the collaboration of the local chief with the colonial regime came into question. In some cases, these local chiefs, freed from the direct link with the colonial administration, proved ready to institute equally repressive and exploitative relations themselves, even to the extent in Cabo Delgado of employing peasant labour on lands reclaimed from the Portuguese and treating the peasants to another version of forced labour.

Patriarchal forms, along with forms venerating age, were very much intact in the first forms of local government to appear in the liberated areas. The "chairmen" [sic] of the villages, the name having been adopted from neighbouring Tanzania, propounded a local authority based in part on traditional authority and in part on the maintenance of colonial structures but with themselves as administrators. A Council of Elders was formed at an early stage which pitted itself against the Central Committee. Later, in the four year period from 1966-69 when the internal struggle within FRELIMO gained momentum, there were tensions between those wielding power in the Depart-

ment of the Interior which had responsibility for administration in the liberated zones and those in the Department of Defence.

These power struggles were played out through the village meetings. The chiefs whose support had been so critical at an earlier stage began to block the development of genuine social transformation.

Chiefs and elders, who in traditional society exercised absolute authority over women and youths, impeded the full participation of these social groups in the revolution. They rejected women's right to participate in the armed struggle and defended the brideprice system, child marriage and polygamy. Emancipation of women would affect the power of the elders to control, buy and sell women who were both producers and re-producers in traditional society. . . . The revolutionaries within the movement argued that all should participate in the liberation struggle and share more equally in decision making be they women, youths or elders. Young men in the FPLM and young girls in the Women's Detachment and militia had *won* the right to have their voices heard, and were no longer prepared to accept the traditional system of blind obedience to the elders. By the end of 1967 the movement's publication was able to report: "Now an awareness had developed for the establishment of new institutions which put more stress on political devotion than on traditional legitimacy of power."

(Munslow 1983:106)

In many areas, then, the village meeting created a new sense of power and a new basis for legitimacy that brought about replacement of the traditional chiefs as chairman of the village and led to the election of a committee of women and men and youth. It was these elected representatives who organized collective production, presided over public meetings, sat as local courts that began to establish new notions of justice, participated in district and provincial assemblies and helped to organize people's militia. (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:93)

The village meeting, then, was a social form that was profoundly educational, a way for peasants who had endured the indignities of a ubiquitous colonial state structured down to sub-sub-chiefs in the tiniest settlements, to construct a new sense of the possible. The colonial state had shaped a sense of self as inferior and without civilization, naming peasant producers as "idle", subjecting them to forced labour and forced cultivation. The village meeting created space for a collective re-naming of self and society, a resumption by peasant women and men of their own social life. It engendered a "social literacy", empowering women and men to see themselves and their experiences as useful and interesting, the real resources for building a new society and

advancing the war. New cultural forms, forms of language, and forms of symbolic representation emerged, all of which were rooted in the collective experiences of women and men and children, fighting and producing and studying. A new "civil society" based on "people's power" began to emerge.

The war was the crucible. The complete resistance of Portuguese colonialism to all nationalist aspirations, despite the advanced state of a decolonizing process throughout the entire African continent, left the Mozambicans with no choice but to fight with arms for national independence. In areas freed from Portuguese control, there was a dramatic lacuna created. The old systems of administration and control had ended. The attempts to put in their place new exploitative systems had been exposed. It was in the context of this radical rupture with the old, this social space created by the war, that new forms emerged. And people's "being more", being free from the daily pain and humiliation of colonial servitude was a big factor. As Joaquim Maquival, a young FRELIMO militant who had been fighting over wide areas of the country put it:

The war has changed the people's situation. Where the war has already broken out, the people are no longer beaten, there are no longer taxes which exploit the people, the people are not humiliated. There are hardships but this is the price of victory.

(Quoted in Mondlane 1983:187)

With the triumph in the Second Congress of 1968 of those advocating the more deeply rooted social transformation of a prolonged people's war, an even greater stress was placed on mobilization and popular participation. The pedagogy of leadership envisioned was not one of hierarchical structures and one way communication. There was a conception of "revolution from below", alluded to in Central Committee discussions as early as 1966 in the wake of the coup in Ghana that ousted Kwame Nkrumah. An article in the FRELIMO publication, "Mozambique Revolution", put it this way:

... fundamentally it is necessary to encourage the people to partake in the political life of the country. Further it is necessary to reject a concept in which the revolution (socialism) is built by an active nucleus of leaders who think, create and give everything and are followed by a passive mass who limit themselves to receiving and executing. This concept is the result of a weak political conscience and expresses a lack of confidence in the fighting and revolutionary capacity of the people. This is the lesson that recent events in Africa teaches.

(Quoted in Munslow 1983:102,103)

Much greater stress was put on the liberated zones as the embryo of new forms of production, health, education and popular participation which would later be transplanted back to an independent Mozambique. The concept of "people's power" gained currency. The new forms of popular social organization in the liberated areas became known, then, as institutions of "people's power". Noted Africanist Basil Davidson visited the liberated zones and attended the Second Congress as one of FRELIMO's guests. His sense of what FRELIMO meant by "people's power" at that time was conveyed in his subsequent article, "The Revolution of people's power: Notes on Mozambique 1969". "The basic principle is that every community should organise itself to analyze its own problems and possibilities, find appropriate solutions and policies and act to bring these solutions and policies into force." (Davidson 1979:127)

The victory of those advocating, "people's power" had a number of consequences for education. The text of the Second Congress resolution on education set out clearly the new emphases.

*On education*

- (1) Development of primary schools shall be accelerated.
- (2) Teacher training programme for primary school shall be developed in order to raise rapidly its numbers and its technical level.
- (3) Intensive literacy campaigns among the masses of the people, men, women, old and young people shall be promoted.
- (4) Special courses for raising rapidly the level of knowledge of the militants shall be organized.
- (5) Young Mozambican women shall be encouraged to complete at least primary school education.
- (6) Production centres shall be created at every school place for self-maintenance.
- (7) A system shall be established which shall make it possible for the students to interrupt temporarily their studies in order to participate in teaching and literacy campaigns.
- (8) It shall be the duty of all Mozambican students to take part, whenever it may be deemed necessary, in the various tasks of the struggle for national liberation.
- (9) Development of schools of political training shall be promoted.

(Mondlane 1983:193,194)

New ideas about the link between study and production and between school and community are evident. The schools in the liberated areas were to include the establishment of production centers, with much more stress on self-reliance. In addition, the schools were to engage even more vigorously



in production tasks in the community at large, with active programmes to combat the notion of a division between hand and brain. Elitist notions of schooling as a channel out of productive activities into a management or administrative strata, then, were discouraged.

Schooling as a process to groom an elite was challenged by new and active roles of the students in teaching others. It became common throughout the liberated areas for those who could read and write, however minimally, to teach those who could not. Students with only the equivalent of third or fourth grade education themselves often delayed a further year of study for themselves, devoting a year to bringing along another wave of children by day and a group of adults by night.

At the second national conference of the Department of Education and Culture in 1970, President Samora Machel explained FRELIMO's position:

... to us education does not mean teaching how to read and write, creating an elite group of graduates, with no direct relationship to our objectives. ... Just as one can wage an armed struggle without carrying out a revolution, one can also learn without educating oneself in a revolutionary way.

(Machel 1974:39)

By 1974, the number of children in the four year primary school programme in the various provinces was well over 20,000. More than 300 students were enrolled in the 5th-8th year classes at Bagamoyo. Training courses for primary teachers had been running since 1972. More than 100 students were doing post-secondary level courses abroad on FRELIMO scholarships.

The FRELIMO Secondary School, now reopened and based in Bagamoyo, up the coast from Dar es Salaam, also played an important role in these educational activities. It was common for students to return from Bagamoyo to the liberated zones. The Bagamoyo school was instructed in 1972 to prepare literacy materials both for students and teachers. Entire classes from the secondary school went through a week long training course and then spent the long vacation in the liberated areas doing literacy between 1972 and 1974.

The embryo of a new education system was well in place, then, by the time of the coup in Portugal. A Department of Education and Culture had been established in FRELIMO and national conferences had taken place in 1968 and again towards the end of 1970, drawing together educators from throughout the liberated areas. In February 1973, a first national pedagogic seminar had been held, analyzing programmes and teaching methods. At the

time of the coup in April 1974, educators from throughout the liberated areas were gathered together in the first literacy seminar. (FRELIMO 1976:16)

*Post-coup Mozambique: "Study, produce and fight"*

These traditions from the liberated areas which freed people's energies to find solutions to their own problems were all drawn on in the immediate post-coup and post-independence euphoria in Mozambique. Literacy seems to have been the central activity into which those identifying with FRELIMO placed their hopes and energies. It was an unusual moment, characterized by massive changes and confusing currents as old systems broke down, and new symbols and forms and languages gained hold. A language of hope emerged, espousing justice over against privilege, solidarity over against individualism and the collective over the private. Radical egalitarianism was the order of the day. The same people whose lives and communities had been subjected to a multiplicity of forms and institutions and discourses by state and church labelling them as "ignorant" and "idle" were suddenly caught up in a totally new disposition of power and knowledge. From one day to the next, they became the resources for socialist construction. They were not "stupid" but "made ignorant", not "idle" but "denied opportunity" to participate freely in production and marketing.

The Mozambican people were the victims of ignorance and obscurantism, originating from the Portuguese colonial system in power in our country. . . . to better exploit us it was necessary to keep the people in ignorance, unable to perceive their miserable condition. As a consequence of this we have the fabulous percentage of illiteracy which exists in our country.

(Report on Literacy from Tete province 1976:1. My translation<sup>6</sup>)

Ordinary people suddenly saw themselves as legitimate actors in public social spaces hitherto out of bounds. The desire for education was intense, both for those long denied it and for those who had had access to it and now were caught up in a process where making it available to others was a way of affirming their commitment to "people's power". In any case, the official schools were in disarray, with the mass exodus of Portuguese settlers already gaining momentum.

The new sense of mastery over social space meant that people felt free to organize their own education. Those needing schooling in a given community took the initiative to organize it, finding their own way to finance books, locate teachers and arrange for classrooms. There were no experts. Those with a

little education felt free to offer what they had to others, and indeed especially in rural communities where educated people were scarce, real pressures were put on people to do so. The report from Tete province cited, above captures the tone of this period, and the central role that literacy played in the period leading up to independence.

Our combat in this area [literacy] should not countenance retreats nor puff itself up with victories which are registered in tiny concentrations of population. We must count on the efforts of all those who have had the opportunity to study; they "must be the match that lights the flame that is the people" and their vision must be broad enough to encompass Mozambique from the Rovuma to the Maputo.

Report on literacy from Tete province 1975:1

All kinds of individuals and organizations rose to the challenge, particularly in the larger centers. Provincial reports prepared for a National Seminar on Literacy held in Ribauca in April 1975, two months before independence, document the beginnings of literacy in each province. In Lourenco Marques, the capital, activities began in August 1974, three months after the coup and two months before the Lusaka Accords were signed which recognized FRELIMO as the effective power to govern Mozambique. In addition to FRELIMO militants, several other organizations, both old and new, were involved in literacy. These included the Associacao Africana de Mocambique (African Association of Mozambique), the Associacao Academica de Mocambique (Academic Association of Mozambique) and the Centro Popular de Alfabetizacao (Popular Literacy Center), all of which organized classes. In addition, the Centro Associativo dos Negros (Black Contact Center) organized a training course for monitors and a group of young people volunteered to teach literacy to soldiers stationed in Lourenco Marques.

With the establishment of the transitional government on September 25, 1974, came the formation of Dynamizing Groups (Grupos Dinamizadores, henceforth referred to as GDs). The GDs were formed throughout the country, in workplaces, communities, schools and other social sectors. These activists were in part self-selected and in part appointed by FRELIMO, serving as a vital point of contact between FRELIMO and local level organizational structures, facilitating communication both from the top down and from the bottom up. The GDs were organized with a secretary and assistant secretary and "responsibles" for various sectors including mobilization and organization, information and propaganda, education and culture, women, social affairs, production, commerce and finance. They were charged with the task

of mobilizing fellow workers and neighbours in collective social, economic and cultural activities.

Literacy became one of the central activities of the GDs. The literacy sub-commissions of the GDs were organized from the base up, through locality and district structures and on to provincial level. This provided a lot of new impetus for literacy activities throughout each province.

At least one member of the GD had to be a woman. While it is true in many cases that the woman was turned to only on questions directly related to women and family affairs (or worse still, automatically assumed to be the provider of food for all GD functions!) there is no doubt that the vehicle of the GD gave many women outside the liberated territories their first experience of meetings, group decision-making and speaking in public. For the first time, women saw themselves as subjects shaping a social reality themselves rather than simply as objects being shaped by it.

Above all else, the Dynamizing Groups served as schools in which to learn democratic skills and class unity. Community meetings, organized by Dynamizing Groups on a regular basis, provided a forum for involving citizens in the study and debate of the critical issues facing Mozambique. Throughout the country, participants examined such diverse topics as the divisive effects of tribalism, the need for an alliance between workers and peasants, the problems of rational reconstruction, the reasons for combatting the oppression of women, the necessity for vigilance against agents of the Rhodesian government, and the value of collective action. In addition, Dynamizing Group members explained to the populace important government directives and newly initiated national programmes and discussed ways to mobilize them more effectively for collective activities. (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:117)

In Sofala, literacy was launched in the district of Beira in June 1974 and spread rapidly to other districts in the province. The report to the Ribaue meetings refers to mobilization for literacy through the use of posters, wall newspapers, radio programmes, mass meetings organized by FRELIMO and later by the Dynamizing Groups. The report also refers to mobilization through individual contacts in the community by the literacy monitors themselves, by those in charge of Education and Culture and by the actual literacy students. The Sofala report also mentions training two separate groups of monitors, one group for mobilization and organizational work and another to do the actual teaching.

In Sofala, as elsewhere, the methodology for literacy was locally determined. The range of options throughout the country included adaptation of the materials already prepared in the Bagamoyo Secondary School for the

student literacy campaigns in the liberated zones, use of existing primary school texts, and development of materials with variants on a Paulo Freire methodology based on, a code of "generative" words derived from the social milieu of the students. There were even reports of centers that began by teaching vowels, and moved on to consonants, words and phrases. In Sofala, materials were based on a local inventory of generative words. It is interesting to note those that were chosen, an index of the themes deemed most resonant in the midst of the radical disruption brought about by the coup. They included "FRELIMO, people, food, capulana (African cloth), factory, maize, comrade, building block, cane, work, health and beer"

The Sofala document also makes reference to adaptations of materials published by FRELIMO's Department of Education and Culture, citing problems in their use because they had already been well outpaced by events and do not refer to the important themes of the moment, namely, "people's power, FRELIMO structures and national reconstruction". (Report on literacy from Manica and Sofala 1975:4). The report concludes that in Sofala and Manica, the adjoining province, some 20,000 were made literate through the classes organized by FRELIMO in this period.

The report from Tete province indicates that literacy activities as such were carried out only in the provincial capital. In the districts, schooling was available to adults, taught by teachers who worked with children during the day. Again the decentralized character of the campaigns and the space for local initiatives is striking in the report. In Tete, the first training course for literacy teachers was led by a group set up two months earlier to study the best way to launch literacy in Tete city. The groups studied various texts and had the opportunity to meet with people doing literacy in Lourenco Marques and Beira as well as with people linked to the Department of Education and Culture of FRELIMO who recounted their experiences with literacy in the liberated areas. The report indicates that the method used was an adaption of the Paulo Freire method. (Report on literacy from Tete province 1975:3) Generative words were chosen, a dialogue initiated around these words, the words written on the blackboard, divided into syllables and the syllabic families arranged into a discoveries chart in which the students could seek out new words.

The students themselves were active as problem solvers for the literacy centers. The shortages of funds in the district to buy supplies were resolved by the students. In Angonia, they decided to contribute the equivalent of one day's pay to literacy. The report indicates that the literacy students themselves administered the fund, and no distinctions were made between those paying a little, those paying a lot, and the unemployed who put in nothing. In a rural

district, the students organized themselves to bring maize to sell at harvest time in order to buy supplies for the literacy classes.

In a profound sense the broader political process itself was the teacher, with both literacy monitors and literacy students caught up in it. Their interaction took forms very different from typical classroom activities and teacher-student power roles.

In many units, above all in the provincial capital, cultural gatherings were held to bring teachers and students together, both participating actively. Political themes are also discussed in these gatherings. They make an immense contribution towards breaking down the differences, that can exist between monitors and students, and as well are a big help in awakening each person's creative initiatives.

In some units, the students themselves are already making their own wall newspapers. This creates great interest and desire to learn even more.

Report on literacy in Tete province 1975:5

In many cases it is hard to distinguish between adult literacy and expanded primary schooling for children. In Sofala, early literacy activities were carried out by a group of students, teachers and workers who formed the "Comissao Contra a Discriminacao da Crianca e Para a Alfabetizacao" (Commission Against Anti-child Discrimination and for Literacy). The report from densely-populated Nampula province, bastion of the Portuguese military up to the end of the war, refers to phenomenal numbers of new schools throughout the districts for both children and adults. In Mecuburi district alone, 290 new schools were functioning with 16,000 pupils. In another district, Erati, there were 300 monitors at work with 14,400 students. The report indicates that the Dynamizing Groups were completely unable to keep up with the demand for schools, teachers and teaching materials. Local populations were undeterred when their requests were not met. They proceeded to build schools themselves and choose teachers locally with at least second or third class. The report goes on to detail the kinds of problems such a spontaneous mass movement posed for inexperienced activists with few means at their disposal.

The reports generally depict an ambience with high energy levels and dedication abounding. On balance, it seems to have been a rich experience. In Nampula, as in Tete, new forms developed beyond the literacy classroom in which the monitors were students and the broader political process the teacher. Also striking is the degree of autonomy in each province, with those immediately involved tackling fundamental questions about content and methodology rather than simply executing programmes defined elsewhere.

In Nampula, the monitors continued their training after the short initial courses, holding meetings on Sunday afternoons to trade experiences. The report speaks of these meetings as useful in capturing the monitor's own interest in the teaching themes. In the Nampula report, as at other points in the documentation prepared for the Ribaue Seminar, the question of language comes up. In Nampula, it was tackled by using Macua, the local language, in the theme discussions and gradually introducing Portuguese. Another rich aspect of these Sunday sessions was the validation of local culture, with the literacy teachers participating in identifying stories, riddles and proverbs from the area to weave into the political discussions of the daily themes.

During the courses, efforts were made to have the monitors develop a critical consciousness about the concrete situations and problems of the people. To this end, the future teacher presented reports during the sessions about contacts and conversations had with people in the various communities, including future literacy students. This work permitted the monitors to do a survey of the vocabulary in popular use and the generative codes in preparation for the collective discussions. At the same time it allowed the monitors to appreciate the real problems of the people seen from the side of the most exploited.

(Report from Nampula province 1975:5)

Inhambane province in southern Mozambique also presents interesting questions in its report. In response to the call to do literacy throughout the districts, work began based on the FRELIMO manual. The Inhambane activists discovered that without monitors well prepared, this method gave few results. The group based in the provincial capital set itself the task of reorganizing the teaching methodology and divided into two groups, one charged with the task of studying how to teach spoken Portuguese and the other, with the task of restructuring the method for teaching to read and write. Group one came forward with a plan to introduce carefully chosen words drawn from the daily life of the people, work on their pronunciation and begin to build small phrases and sentences with them as an approach to learning to speak Portuguese. Group two proposed an adaptation of the method in the FRELIMO manual, using generative words out of which would come a theme discussion and creation of new words. A selection of generative words was made for Inhambane district. The report indicates that 48,289 people were involved in literacy activities in the province.

Henrique N'Guiraze was, a secondary school teacher at the time in Morrumbala district of Zambezia, where he got caught up in mobilizing the population for literacy as well. Reflecting ten years later on the events of 1975,



N'Guiraze singles out the directive from President Samora Machel to the waiting population in Mozambique after the Lusaka Accords as key.

As a secondary school teacher, I think the movement must have begun with the speech of President Samora and certain documents from FRELIMO in circulation which included the directive to "Study, produce and fight". I think that directive was really valued at that moment. After that speech what we saw was, don't ask me how, but the truth was that from one day to the next, and through the initiative of individuals, schools for adults began to appear on all sides. There was willingness by anybody with any learning to offer freely to teach literacy.

Although there was no uniform methodology, books or programme, everybody invented words with a certain socio-political content based on the local situation. It could be ten words, for example, of this type. Based on these, they tried to motivate people to try to learn. There were brief meetings and courses about literacy at times organized by missionaries. As for the character of these courses, they were very influenced by Paulo Freire. In fact there was much talk about the concept of conscientization.

(Interview with Henrique N'Guiraze, 1985)

It was a period in which the social space for participation was wide open to all those identifying with the FRELIMO project for construction of an independent Mozambique. In several provinces, progressive forces within the Roman Catholic church made their presence felt. Zambezia, along with Manica, Tete and Nampula, were the provinces where literacy action was generated as well from the churches; in many other provinces such as Maputo and Gaza, the churches were virtually non-existent as a force in literacy.

Literacy began as a generalized movement immediately after the coup. But I have knowledge of groups and actually had contact with cases where groups were able to work in semi-clandestine conditions even during the colonial period. I know, for example, of the movement that existed in Manica through the Burgos Fathers, one of whom today occupies a position of responsibility in the field of literacy. I am referring to the head of the Department of Literacy [in the National Directorate of Adult Education] Jose Maria Lerchundi. He and others of the same group had representatives in Sofala and in Tete. We can say that there were small nuclei where this group was active.

(Interview with Henrique N'Guiraze, 1985)

In Zambezia, in the final years of colonialism, the Roman Catholic church had established various education centers that offered both post-primary

schooling for young people and vocational training programmes for workers in general. These centers seem to have enjoyed a certain amount of trust from the local community, and in the period leading up to independence, became important centers for promoting literacy.

In N'Guiraze's area, he as a secondary school teacher trained in a mission school went to a literacy course organized by missionaries and returned to mobilize his students to teach. Their school was responsible for 27 centers and mounted a literacy coordination center in the school. In the afternoons, groups of students went twice weekly to each center to give classes. They had no books but based their teaching and studying on the local situation.

In the adjoining district of Gile, literacy activities were also begun at an early stage. Here a particularly dynamic Italian priest, Domenico Liuzzi organized a network of literacy centers and had the ambitious plan of eradicating illiteracy completely in the district of Gile within five years.

The Dynamizing Groups were an important feature in the organization of literacy in Zambezia.

Because of the way the Dynamizing Groups emerged, their members had a lot of influence in the local situation. Possibly they were chosen by the people themselves, and because of this had a certain political authority. Really, when they called for participation in literacy, there was general acceptance by the people. But, at the same time, maybe because there had been no opportunity to study during the colonial period, the population had a certain fear of the desire to study. They put pressure on those in the GD to find ways for people to study, such as supplying paper and teachers, who at that time we called monitors. These monitors at one point had to be chosen by the students themselves. On this question, the students were very demanding. They chose people they knew and generally did not accept individuals of the same age. They chose people from whom they hoped to learn a lot.

(Interview with Henrique N'Guiraze, 1985)

In Zambezia, as elsewhere, the distinction between literacy for adults and for children was somewhat blurred. The population saw no sense in studying as adults if schooling for their children was not guaranteed. At a certain point the literacy schools became "People's Schools". Adult students began pulling their children out of the still existent official schools, which were seen as symbols of colonialism. While the official schools had 80,000 registered in primary schools, the People's Schools had 200,000. This number more than doubled during the latter part of 1975. (Interview with Henrique N'Guiraze, 1985)

In the "People's Schools" the population had a degree of control over the selection of the teacher and over the content to be taught. Some of them taught in local languages. In general, they were seen to be closely linked to the local reality, the socio-cultural ambience and the moment politically that people were living.

Literacy seems to have been the key activity for those with some degree of education who had not been linked to FRELIMO previously to make contact. Clearly students at the time saw it as highly relevant, perhaps more so than their studies. In Zambesia, senior secondary students were an important part of the labour force for teaching literacy. The fact that the academic year was switched in such a way as to leave six months without classes prompted even more students to devote themselves to literacy.

Without doubt, then, anyone with education was drawn towards literacy. Some offered themselves for opportunist reasons, recognizing FRELIMO as the new force in power and hoping for favours. Others offered themselves as literacy teachers out of a genuine commitment to the broader process, but in so doing also made themselves visible as activists of political confidence. There is no doubt that the literacy movement operated as a kind of filter, many going from it to other activities. As Jose Cardoso suggested, literacy served as a kind of trampoline, and also as a process for the "remission of sins!"

Be that as it may, there is no doubt that a very vibrant mass movement for literacy emerged from 1974-1976. Official estimates suggest that as many as 500,000 may have become literate during this period. (Fonseca:1983:2) The degree of community participation and control it enjoyed, the active role of the students in organizing their own education activities, the diversity of teaching methodologies and materials in use, the emphasis on basing content on local realities, the experimentation with local languages in teaching and the forms for creating a dynamic monitor/student relationship all mark it as an extremely interesting moment in the history of literacy in Mozambique<sup>8</sup>.

### *State provision of education and people's power*

During the eight months of the Transitional government, the mass literacy movement was by no means the only activity of vital interest. There were feverish initiatives at multiple levels as FRELIMO prepared to take over the governing of a country of 10.5 million, 90 percent of whom were illiterate. Creation of the state education service was one of the many tasks. The Ministry of Education of the Transitional Government was headed by the secretary of FRELIMO's own Department of Education and Culture, Gideon Ndobe. The seminar on literacy two months before formal independence was

just one of several such seminars in preparation for the new post-independence education policies and programmes. Each seminar called together FRELIMO education cadres and educators who had been working in the colonial institutions and selected representatives from related sectors to map out guidelines for future work. Those attending the national seminars then returned to their respective provinces to organize similar discussions at provincial level.

The literacy seminar had been preceded by a National Seminar on Education held in Beira in January 1975. This event brought together, for the first time, primary and secondary school teachers from the official schools of the colonial era and FRELIMO cadres working in education. An intense ten days of study and discussion ensued. People I spoke to a year later, during my first visit after independence, still spoke of the meeting with emotion, recalling the shock engendered by FRELIMO's work methods of active participation and discussion. For teachers coming out of the almost entirely closed colonial system, this was indeed a radical departure. Out of this seminar came the decision to discard the entire colonial syllabus and throw out all of the textbooks. New programmes for first to eleventh class were to be drawn up and put into practice immediately. Religious studies were removed from the curriculum and political education and manual work introduced. New political/administrative structures were established in the school. The challenge to teachers from colonial schools was obvious.

... accustomed to simply giving lessons in the classroom, they now have not only to build new kinds of relations with their pupils but also to incorporate their teaching and their education within the community as a whole. The school must be the dynamic factor in the community and its pupils and teachers must be in permanent contact with the local population, learning from them, working with them, and in this way never forgetting why it is they are studying and teaching.

(FRELIMO 1976:8)

Perhaps less evident at the time was the challenge to those from the FRELIMO schools, now dealing with organizational problems on a scale and complexity much beyond what the liberated areas had presented. They were also dealing with a very different context, one of open contestation between old and new values, forms and language, where the culture of colonial-capitalism held daily skirmishes for ascendancy with the new culture of liberation on both subtle and flagrant battlefields.

Yet another seminar during the transitional government tackled the question of technical education, bringing together teachers and senior repre-

sentatives from the Ministry to discuss how to bring technical training in line with national priorities. In this as in other seminars, the work method was that of starting from experience. There was an analysis of technical education in the past and the development of education by FRELIMO, as a solid starting point for understanding present difficulties and finding solutions. (FRELIMO 1976:20). Recommendations were made to build up a network of agricultural, commercial and industrial schools that were less theoretical and more practical, organized in modules allowing easy entry and exit to and from the workplace, less discriminatory against women and more oriented to rural development. (FRELIMO 1976:9)

National independence was celebrated on June 25, 1975. One month afterwards came the nationalizations, of land, health services, funeral and legal services, rentable property, and also education. A national Ministry of Education and Culture was created, ending the practice of multiple school systems, state, private and church. The organizational chart (page 105) shows clearly the intentions of the new ministry, and the formidable weight of its task.

The heaviness of the task became the more difficult since the flow of educated Mozambicans into educational activities ended just as the new national education services were established. This was not necessarily from a lack of appreciation of education's vital importance. It was more in response to the massive outflow of settlers and the desperate shortage of human resources to manage the complexity and scale of the inherited socio-economic infrastructure. Added to the mix was a peculiar pressure to maintain all of this infrastructure intact, seen both internally and externally as a necessary proof of capacity to govern by these "bush rebels" now in power.

### *State-sponsored literacy*

The National Directorate of Literacy and Adult Education was set up in 1976. It began with only three staff members, but these numbers gradually expanded, including the addition of a team from Tanzania and a handful of internationalists. The result of the Ribaue Seminar almost a year earlier provided guidelines for the fledgling directorate. Indeed many activities in the provinces were very much on hold in the expectation of rapid inputs from the newly created state literacy services, including funding, teaching materials and training programmes.

The main conclusions from the Ribaue Seminar concerning methodology included:

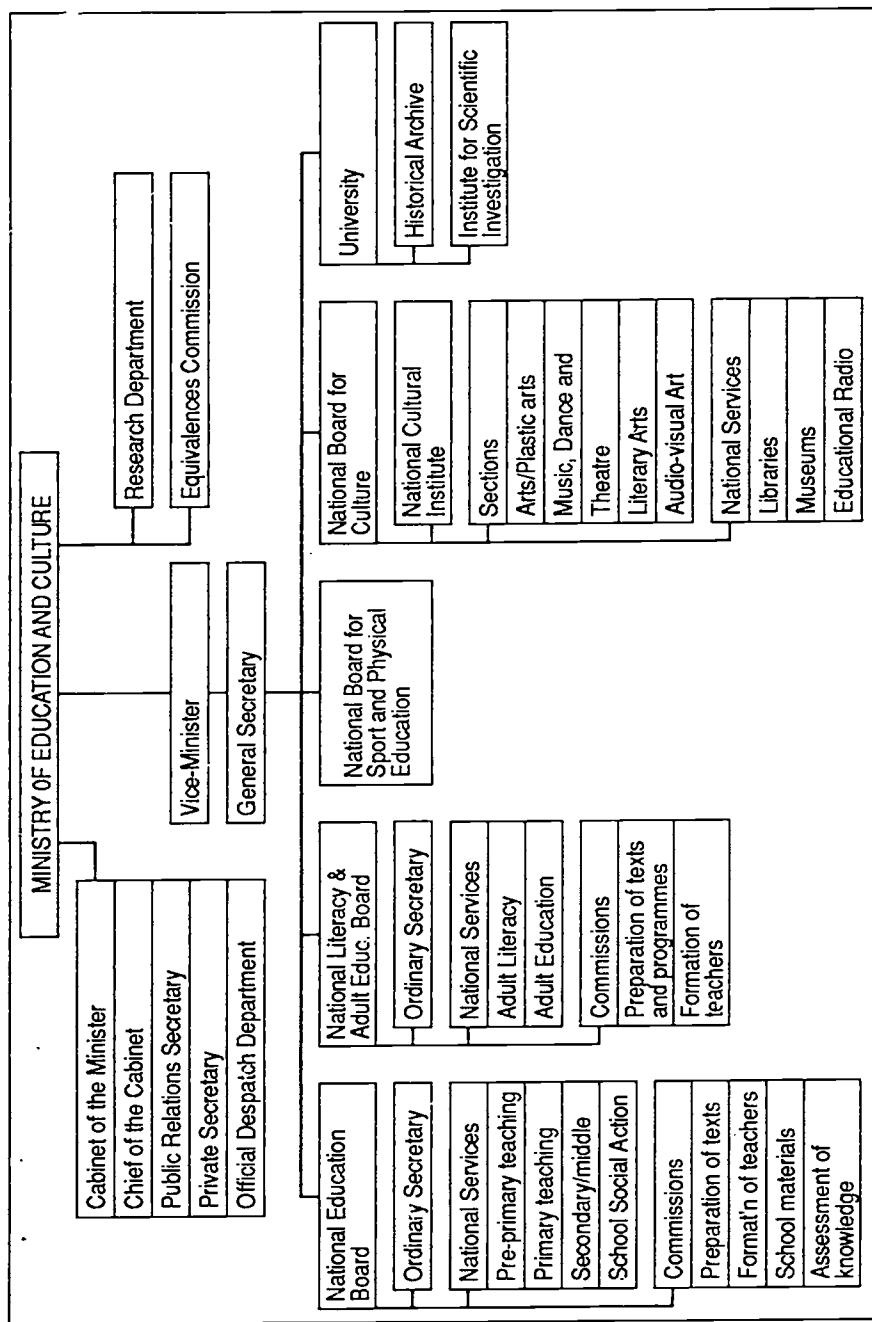


Figure 3: Organisational Chart, Ministry of Education and Culture, 1976

- methods based on an analysis of Mozambican realities, dominant economic and cultural activities, and choice of vocabulary accordingly;
- flexibility, in line with changing realities and critical inputs of both monitors and students;
- no single rigid method should be adopted. Instead a political discussion turning on a motivating word or phrase, if possible reinforced with a picture, should lead to the presentation of a key word and its syllabic families, concluding with the discovery of new words from these syllables;
- Portuguese should be used. Where local languages are in use, they should become languages of support, gradually leading to Portuguese.

(National Institute for Educational Development, INDE 1983:7)

The first year of activities included a national survey to determine the scale of illiteracy. Interestingly neither capacity to speak Portuguese nor numbers literate in other languages seems to have been included in the data collected. Writing a literacy primer was tackled by a team made up of people from different sectors including teachers, students and some who had done literacy through the Academic Association. They came up with a programme based on ten themes related to the revolutionary process and its socio-economic conquests, from which phrases and key words were derived. An analysis of the material early in 1977 identified organizational and technical weaknesses such that a Commission for Programmes and Texts was established which worked from May 1977 to January 1978 on modifying the material and organizing a manual.

The finalized version of the national primer consisted of ten lessons, each with a theme summed up in a key phrase and a key word. The themes were designed to promote active discussion on vital issues in workplace and community and contribute to the larger political process. Far from being narrowly functional or purely work-oriented, they ranged from concrete aspects of the armed struggle to broader themes of cultural affirmation. The manual for literacy teachers gave general suggestions on how to develop the lessons. Some of the specific lesson themes included "The people's war is just"; "The School belongs to the people"; "Defending health is the duty of the people". The math programme was outlined in the teacher's manual, a formidably large volume that also included extensive background information on broader themes related to health, agriculture, housing and appropriate technology.

Given the fact of 90 percent illiteracy in a scattered, predominantly rural population of 10.6 million, there was no way that a national literacy programme could do anything other than envisage a series of campaigns. The



option of eradicating illiteracy in a single mass-based action as in Cuba, and later in Nicaragua, was simply not there.

*Table 4: Selected comparative literacy statistics*

COUNTRY	POPULATION AT INDEPENDENCE/ LIBERATION	PERCENT ILLITERATE	NUMBER ILLITERATE
Cuba	7.0 million	23.6%	1,652,000
Nicaragua	2.0 million	53%	1,060,000
Tanzania	9.0 million	75%	6,750,000
Angola	8.0 million	85 %	6,800,000
Mozambique	10.6million	90%	9,540,000

*(Sources: Bhola:1982; Fordham (ed):1983)*

The 1st National Literacy Campaign was launched in July 1978 and took as its target group 100,000 workers in key sectors of organized production, including industrial and rural workers in factories, businesses, state farms and cooperatives. In addition deputies to the People's Assemblies and members of the defence and security forces were included. Women were also prominent in this phase of literacy activities, with the Organization of Mozambican Women (OMM) playing a very dynamic role in organizing literacy activities, particularly those included as part of the training programmes for OMM activists throughout the country.

The Campaign was launched with ceremonies throughout the country. The suggestions to district and provincial "responsibles" for their speeches to open the campaign included the following guidelines:

The central purpose of literacy for adults is to liberate the creative initiatives of the working classes, by equipping them with basic scientific knowledge and instruments of analysis, which permit their best and full participation in the construction of a socialist society in our country.

(Basic orientations for speeches to open the  
1st National Literacy Campaign DNAEA, 1978)

In Maputo itself, the Campaign was opened by President Samora Machel in a massive gathering of workers in the national railway complex, CFM. The campaign had an enrollment of 130,000 from the priority sectors and an equally large number from non-priority sectors, mainly at community level. A first national evaluation was carried out in November 1978, just four months after the campaign began. Since many people were already involved in programmes of literacy throughout the country when the campaign was officially launched, it was assumed that many would pass. In fact, the results were very low, in part relating to the complexity of the test itself and in part to the unfamiliarity with either administering or writing tests. The period of the campaign was extended to 18 months and a second improved test was given in which 140,000 of the 260,000 registered in the campaign passed.

*Table 5: Literacy campaign results 1979-1982*

	FIRST CAMPAIGN 1978/1979	SECOND CAMPAIGN 1980	THIRD CAMPAIGN 1981	FOURTH CAMPAIGN 1982
Initial Enrollment	300,000	(a)290,000	246,500	200,364
Final Enrollment	264,067	253,188	161,193	82,675
Examined	315,478	198,579	117,277	54,984
Pass target	100,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Passed	139,369	119,394	61,095	37,430

(a) Estimate

*Source: Adapted from Lind 1985:2*

The 2nd National Literacy Campaign was launched on February 16, 1980, to coincide with the opening of the academic year. This campaign targeted 200,000 men and women, with the objective of eradicating illiteracy in the following sectors:

- permanent workers in units of industrial and agricultural production
- Frelimo Party members
- deputies to the People's Assemblies at all levels

- leaders in the mass organizations, particularly the Organization of Mozambican Women, OMM

In the 2nd National Literacy Campaign 120,000 of the 290,000 initially enrolled succeeded in passing the test.

As for post-literacy, two approaches were taken. Mass campaigns for post-literacy began a year later, in 1980. Of the 140,000 who passed literacy in 1979, 87,000 were enrolled in post-literacy, a programme of adult basic education designed to give the equivalent of four years of primary schooling. The other approach was the establishment of residential courses for workers where first post-literacy courses giving the equivalent of the third and fourth year of primary schooling were offered. Later some centers offered accelerated courses for the fifth and sixth years of general schooling. In addition to the centers run by the Ministry of Education, some workplaces offered these accelerated programmes of general schooling. The Ministry of Public Works and Housing, for example, had a training programme in which unskilled workers with fourth class could spend a year in the training center and come out with both sixth class standing in general education and a first qualification as a skilled worker.

*Table 6: Post-literacy campaign results 1980-82*

	1ST CAMPAIGN 1980	2ND CAMPAIGN 1981	3RD CAMPAIGN 1982	4TH CAMPAIGN 1983
Enrolled	87,000	144,000	87,000	40,000
Passed	26,000	28,000	25,000	15,000

*Source: National Directorate of Adult Education,  
Ministry of Education, Maputo, 1984.*

Within these results, it is very difficult to differentiate distinct social groupings. The DNEA itself made no efforts to distinguish literacy results for women from those for men, or those of urban dwellers from those in the rural areas. The 1980 Census makes some contribution towards discrimination. Within the 72.2 percent of the total population that was illiterate in 1980, 59 percent of the illiterates were male and 84.6 percent were female. The

illiteracy rate for women from 15-19 was 66.7 percent, moving up to 83.2 percent for the women from 20-24, 91 percent of the women from 25-39 and 95.9 percent of the women from 40-59.

While 72.2 percent of the population in general was illiterate, there were important differences between urban and rural areas. In the urban areas, only 40.3 percent of the population was illiterate while in the rural areas, the illiterate population was 77.1 percent. By far the highest rates of illiteracy were to be found among rural women, with 94.6 percent of those in the 25-39 year age range illiterate and 97.7 percent of those in the 40-59 year range. Even among 10-14 year old girls in the rural areas, the illiteracy rate was 70.5 percent whereas urban girls from 10-14 had only a 31.9 percent rate of illiteracy. (Conselho Coordenador de Recenseamento:1983)

In the period in 1976 and 1977, the Mozambican Women's Organization had put particular stress on literacy for women, and had organized special residential courses for their own provincial and district level OMM activists. These courses, which drew women away from their normal responsibilities to concentrate only on literacy had had phenomenally high results. For the women who came, the course marked a dramatic expansion of their worlds, starting from airplane travel to reach the national capital to a three month period of new experiences. The women doing the courses progressed remarkably, freed to concentrate only on studying, recognizing how their newly acquired speaking, reading and writing work could feed into their regional organizing of other women, getting enormous support from the national OMM staff during the course including regular Friday night newspaper reading sessions and frequent visits, being exposed new places and ideas through films and study trips to local factories, museums, and child care centers.

None of these conditions could be duplicated easily at provincial and district level and OMM participation in the national campaigns dwindled over the years. The decision to concentrate literacy in organized work places rather than the community by definition cut down dramatically on the number of women involved in literacy. Of the 5.6 million economically active at the time of the Census, 2.9 million were women. More than 2.8 million of them were agriculture workers, however, almost all of whom were in the family sector and therefore outside the target area of the literacy campaigns. Women accounted for only 23,064 of the 346,794 industrial workers, 510 of the 42,121 construction workers, 2,206 of the workers in the transport and communications sector and 21,596 of the 112,244 workers in commerce. Even in the social sectors like health and education where women tend to be concentrated,

only 6,736 of the 32,207 workers registered in education were women and 4,932 of the 15,186 workers registered in health. (Conselho Coordenador do Recenseamento 1983:33)

The official literacy campaigns, shifted the locus of literacy from community to workplace. They also shifted the teachers from community volunteers, including many secondary school students and literate adults, to workplace appointees, whose voluntariness came increasingly into question over the years. The DNAEA guidelines were that people with a minimum of sixth class (basic primary) should teach literacy while post-literacy should be taught by those with a minimum of sixth class (lower secondary). By and large, the teachers were fellow-workers although some large enterprises with many illiterates and difficulties in finding minimally qualified teachers began to admit new workers just to teach literacy. The teachers were given a 21 day pre-service training course organized by literacy instructors at provincial and district levels. These were meant to be followed up by in-service training consisting of working visits to literacy centers by the pedagogical support staff and occasional seminars and refresher courses. Additional pedagogical support was given through an audio-visual department which provided weekly radio programmes aimed at both mobilization and technical support for teachers, and a broadsheet for the newly literate entitled "Keep Studying".

Literacy services were gradually set up in each of the ten provinces and later, Maputo city. They included a head, one staff person each for literacy and adult education services, a staff person in charge of audio-visual services and teams of instructors, one for pre-service training and the other for in-service training. At district level there was also a literacy team consisting of three or four people to carry out all of the necessary tasks, both educational and pedagogical.

A National Commission for Literacy and Adult Education was set up as the supreme coordinating body for the campaigns, composed of representatives of party, workplace, mass organizations, key ministries and the Ministry of Education and Culture itself. The Commission was presided over by the Minister of Education and was scheduled to meet three times a year to deliberate over the operation of the campaigns and to determine policy guidelines. This Commission and its provincial and district counterparts never functioned effectively, however, either not meeting at all or meeting with different representatives each time, or meeting only for ritual occasions of launching campaigns or awarding certificates without grappling with the very real problems the campaigns were encountering throughout the year<sup>10</sup>

With flagging results, measures were taken to underscore the responsibility of the economic sectors in guaranteeing basic education for their workers. The Council of Ministers passed Law 1/81 at the beginning of 1981, making it obligatory for workplaces to provide opportunities for education for their work force. The law created a clear tri-partite division of responsibility for literacy among workplace administration, education officials and Frelimo Party/mass organizations. Human resource departments were to be created in the economic sectors that could assume responsibility for planning and organizing literacy and post-literacy for their workers. The role of education staff was that of setting norms and methodologies and evaluating. The party and mass organizations had the major role of mobilizing. The actual coordination, organization, execution and control rested with the workplace administration.

The numbers successfully completing the literacy programme and passing the exam declined dramatically after 1980. The Ministry of Education explanation of why the campaigns were in such difficulties touches on a number of very complex factors. The reasons cited included inflated numbers in 1979/80, reflecting already literate adults needing certification, campaigns moving successively to rural areas and hence incorporating people with less ability to speak Portuguese, major intensification of the war mounted by South African backed insurgents, catastrophic droughts and floods, and limitations of the teachers. Other reasons cited included lack of a "literate environment" and reading matter for post literacy as well as abandonment by literacy teachers seeking paid employment.

The evaluation document by Lind also includes hierarchical structures in the DNEA and the tendency to centralization and one-way, top-down communication.

The DNEA never had enough contact with the situation at grassroots level, in order to be able to act adequately and efficiently. ... Linked to this problem is the fact that the campaigns were too rigidly and centrally programmed. It was, however, judged difficult to rely on more flexibility at lower levels, due to the lack of personnel with enough education and training for more decentralized comprehensive solutions.

(Lind 1985:6)

Another fundamental problem she signals is the profound ambivalence between viewing literacy as a mass campaign with political objectives for increased participatory democracy and viewing literacy as the beginning of formal schooling for adults with technical-professional objectives. The

decision to target centers of organized production rather than the community shifted literacy very much to a discourse around skills, training and higher productivity. The aim was to attain certification of basic primary schooling and thereby have access to the general system of education and technical training courses. This, of course, had an enormous impact on the teachers, the students and all those involved in literacy. (Lind 1985:10)

### *A new National Education System (NES)*

Despite the signs that the mass campaigns were in serious difficulties, the DNEA was, by 1982, drawn fully into the global educational reform programme enthusiastically taken up by the Ministry of Education and Culture. "The National Education System is an essential element of the long-term battle to win economic independence", said Minister of Education, Graca Machel, in presenting the proposal for the NES to the National People's Assembly in October 1981. She went on to say that what had functioned up until then was a series of education and training activities inherited at independence in which only the contents and programmes had been altered, leaving intact the broader structures. This had allowed each to develop at its own pace with its own mechanisms of organization, methodology, inspection and evaluation. What was desired was a coherent national system with interacting and compatible components and an integral link to the socio-economic development of the country.

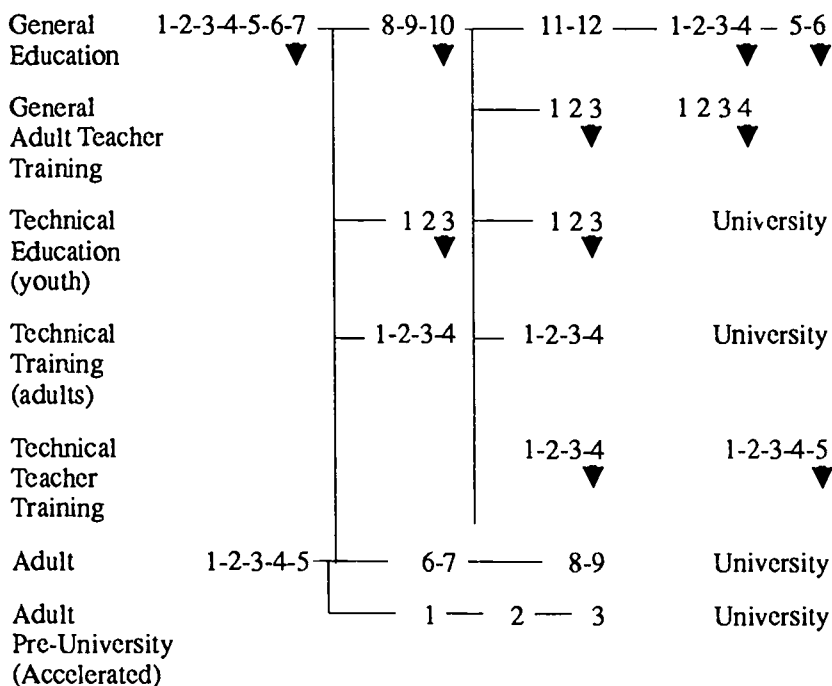
The NES proposal consisted of five inter-locking sub-systems, namely, general education, adult education, technical/vocational education, teacher training and higher education. There was a four tier structure of primary, secondary, post-secondary and higher education, with a plan to introduce the NES in phases starting with the introduction in 1983 of the first grade of general education and the first two years of adult education.

The adult education sub-system was targetted for those 15 years and over. It consisted of a parallel system of general education with the first phase, basic adult illiteracy, followed with a graded programme of primary education. Adults were meant to be able to move freely into technical schools, teacher training and finally university programmes. The literacy component was of two years duration, taking into account the special teaching and learning problems of literacy in a second language. The third year was also mass based, with centers in workplace and community, and was designed to reach the stage where a reversion back to illiteracy was impossible. From fourth year on, the adult education programme was to shift to night school or to workplace-based



schools offering secondary level studies. The option for a graded sub-system of adult education, closely articulated with the sub-systems of general and technical education pushed literacy and post-literacy even more away from popular education and in the direction of formal schooling.

*Table 7: National Education System \**



\* *National Education System to be introduced in phases between 1983 and 1994*

*1 2 3 numbers indicate years in each stage*

▼ *indicates major exit from schooling into the work force*

*(Source: Adapted from Ministry of Education/INDE 1982:24)*

The literacy curriculum of the NES included both language skills and mathematics. The content of the new language programme reflected a shift from the themes of the national liberation struggle to the themes of national reconstruction. The units of the first year programme touched on such themes as organizing cooperatives, women's participation in development, care of machines, basic notions of post-natal care and solidarity in the anti-apartheid struggle. The literacy programme set out methodologically to take the fact of literacy in a second language with utmost seriousness. Basic literacy was stretched out over a two year programme with six two hour class sessions to consolidate each new family of sounds. For example, the key word "sabao" (soap) and the phrase "Soap is good for washing the baby" are used to introduce sa se si so su and ba be bi bo bu. Short sentences speak of washing the baby daily, taking the baby to the well-baby clinic regularly, feeding the baby breast milk, introducing the baby to soup, banana and papaya and washing the baby's clothes carefully. Thus thematic content is introduced while working on words formed with the new syllabic families. In this particular unit, the words included "sopa" (soup), "banana" (banana), "saude" (health) and "bebe" (baby).

The two hour teaching session included a substantial portion of time each day for oral skills, including dialogues, role plays, socio-dramas and structural exercises. The decision to introduce this component resulted from the testing of the materials at Michafutene during 1982 and the recognition that doing literacy in a second language necessitated real attention to learning to *speak* Portuguese. Classroom observation during 1983, when the new materials were introduced, seemed to indicate that these methods, while they may have been appropriate for the learners' needs, were well beyond the teachers' skills. Real limitations on the part of the volunteer teachers were evident, whether in facilitating discussions aimed at building critical consciousness or in using language teaching methods that allowed students actually to master spoken Portuguese<sup>11</sup>.

The teachers' manuals were simplified in the new materials, with each page of the manual including the material in the student's book and a step by step suggestion of how to teach the lesson, with part on speaking skills, part on reading skills and part on writing skills. There were tests built into the materials to try to measure progress on the one hand and give some experience in doing simple tests on the other.

Worker participation in the new programmes of literacy and post-literacy launched in the National Education System continued to dwindle dramatical-

ly. All efforts were focussed on writing the new curriculum and text books and on training programmes to introduce them to the teachers. The new Class 1 programme of General Education and First Year and Second Year of Adult Education were introduced in 1983. Class 2 of General Education was introduced in 1984. During 1984, both Class 3 of General Education and Year 3 of Adult Education were introduced. Classes 4 and 5 of Primary Education were introduced in 1986 and 1987.

Meanwhile, the numbers involved in the literacy programmes continued to decline. In the first two national campaigns, 140,000 and 120,000 had passed the literacy exam. Only 60,000 had passed the exam in 1981 and by 1982, the number was down to 40,000. By then, a substantial infrastructure had been built, with adult education personnel at national and provincial level and throughout the 115 districts of the country, serving what were, in fact, very small numbers of people. The concentration on the pedagogical aspects of the new curriculum and the neglect of the organizational aspect meant that new curriculum materials were introduced into a literacy programme in a severe, albeit unrecognized, organizational crisis. In 1983, those who had passed literacy in 1982 entered the new second year programme and beginners entered the first year programme. Almost 31,000 passed the first year exam and 15,000 passed the second year. (DNEA: 1984) This was just slightly over the 40,000 who had passed first year alone in 1982. The last campaign using the old adult education materials was held for repeaters and those accessing the system from the general primary school system. Slightly over 15,000 passed.

All attention in planning the new Adult Education Sub-system had been concentrated on pedagogical questions. Meanwhile, in many workplace adult education centers, the planning and organization problems had become insurmountable. The close monitoring of progress with the new materials made it clear that the results registered from past campaigns often did not indicate pedagogical failure as such. In other words, the high failure rates from earlier campaigns were not to be interpreted as individual incapacity of workers who had duly completed the programmes of studies, done the final test and not been able to pass it. More common were the organizational failures. There were many literacy centers functioning only minimally, with irregular class sessions covering only a tiny portion of the programme of studies. Inadequately prepared teachers tended to get little support for their efforts, abandoned save for the occasional inspection visit that often included harassment for the few who were present over widespread absenteeism and public laments about the poor quality of the teaching. Perhaps even more fundamental, however,

was the seriousness of the war itself. There were profound disruptions in every province by RENAMO terrorist actions. The economic destabilization tactics being carried out by South Africa were creating havoc with foreign exchange. The disinformation campaigns by South Africa were having some measure of success, creating a climate of rumour and intrigue, making people anxious about the future of the country and the ability of the FRELIMO government to survive. With the impact of the international economic crisis and severe drought conditions added to the mix, survival was very much on the agenda. It was not a climate that was propitious for literacy.

### *The literacy teacher, educating the educators*

The recruitment and training of the teachers was, in fact, a major problem, but not one for which the teachers, as such, could be blamed. First, few workers were genuinely recruited to teach through anything approaching mobilization or persuasion. Once it became obligatory by law to provide adult basic education in the workplace, management in most cases simply allocated workers to teach literacy just as they would to any other area of factory or farm activity. Workers who were to teach attended three to six week courses held in the months before the campaign at provincial training centers or in the workplace itself. Some workers actually arrived at the courses offered by the DNEA thinking they were going to a professional up-grading course. Only on arrival did they find that they were being trained to teach literacy!

Once in the training courses, the workers were systematically stripped of their own experiences as workers and as adults, along with any ideas, skills or motivation they might have had about literacy. The training courses themselves made the trainees into "pupils" interacting with "teachers" in classic molds. In these courses, the trainees had their own experiences of subordination as pupils reproduced for them. Diagnostic tests were given on arrival in both Portuguese and mathematics. Much was made of the low quality of the results, a certified inadequacy of the trainee as the first step in the training process.

The poor results were real enough. The workers, whether from schools under colonialism or the overcrowded schools with undertrained teachers that characterized the explosion of education in the early years of independence, had very little command of either language or math skills. After schooling, many of them had had no need to read, write or count in their jobs and, at best, read the newspaper with some regularity. Many of them spoke little Portuguese on the job as well, since informal contact with fellow workers was usually in the local language of the region.

While the lack of language and math skills was evident, the question was whether a test was the appropriate way to deal with these weaknesses. As first step in a training course, it served to confirm the workers' sense of their own inadequacy, especially in this new (and usually unasked for) task as teachers, and to establish the power of the trainer, not as colleague and friend to be counted on for support in the new task of literacy but as, the authority figure, the inspector. Rather than being encouraged to share what they did know with fellow workers and learn more in the process, as had been the case in the earlier mass campaigns, the trainees first experience in the training course was to have their own lack of knowledge confirmed. Whatever resources they brought as adult workers, their life experiences, their work skills, their political consciousness were of no interest. Their poor language and math skills defined them as deficient.

The courses established a rigid time-table of disciplines to be given in 55 minute periods, usually six per day. The disciplines included general teaching methodology, Portuguese and math teaching methods, organization, psychopedagogy, and up-grading programmes in basic language and math skills. Each discipline was evaluated with an exam. Support texts were often handed out and the evaluation tended to be one that encouraged memorization of these texts.

The courses operated in, provincial centers for literacy staff training. Here a social setting was established with a set of rules for the workers that replicated those of a secondary boarding school. Adults workers, used to controlling their own lives and time (at least when off the shop floor), were placed in a boarding school regime with a time-table for waking up, washing, flag-raising, meals, classes, cultural activities and recreation. Most trainees had family responsibilities (some women actually brought their babies). Others were active in community affairs or in the activities of the organizations for women and youth. In the training centers, however, strict boarding school routines were replicated with housing in dormitories, complete with inspection for tidiness. Attendance and punctuality were also marked and there was a need to make formal requests for week-end leave even when there were no classes during the week-ends and the trainees lived in the town where the courses were being held. The set of internal rules and regulation of the center reinforced the trainees' sense of powerlessness, stripping them of their normal capacities as adults in organizing their lives.

The trainers established extremely formal classroom procedures with students rising when the trainer entered and departed, and in many cases, also standing up to answer questions. The formalization of the authority and power

of the trainer was very strong in establishing basic power relations of hierarchy and subordination.

There was no contact with real classes and real illiterate students. The practice teaching sessions with fellow-workers were far from the actual conditions of a literacy classroom with the concrete problems of engaging illiterate workers through the twin barriers posed by language on the one hand, given that many spoke only minimal Portuguese, and by the social learning of how to "do class", making the workers into passive recipients for what the teachers "gave".

The training course included no experience of another way of "doing class", despite much discussion in general methodology about the deficiencies of colonial pedagogy and the need for active, participatory methods rather than lectures and rote learning. This contradiction was so evident at one of the national level courses for provincial trainers that the trainees made criticisms of it in their evaluation of the course, only to return to their own provinces and impose the same orthodoxy of lectures and dictations in the provincial centers. All was in its place when the teacher was positioned at the front of the room, and the students were in rows, ready to hear. The language of questions and answers was a special one, controlled by the teacher who knew the "right" answer, and deftly (or not so deftly) guided the students towards it. This situation was quickly perceived and responded to by the students, establishing a kind of simulated openness of discussion, implicitly recognized by both sides as a kind of language game in which there was only one right answer and the teacher always knew it. The teachers and their classroom practices were, in fact, a highly problematic area within literacy.

Clearly, then, the process of literacy in post-independence Mozambique passed through various phases, echoing the larger political process and the struggle between forms of genuine "people's power", paternalistic forms of revolution from above, and cruder forms of silencing and subordination in the name of the larger socialist project. These struggles played themselves out in multiple settings, with a diversity of results, perhaps best understood by looking in detail at the actual practices of literacy in one workplace. It is to a detailed study of an urban factory literacy center and the experience of literacy for the women and men in that setting that we will now turn.

## CHAPTER 5

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# *Approaching research in a factory literacy center*

The walled and landscaped food processing complex called Matola Industrial Company (Companhia Industrial de Matola; hereafter CIM) is just one of the many embodiments of a colonial past to be found in Mozambique's capital, Maputo. A four lane freeway links Matola with the center of the national capital. Maputo includes the "cement city" of the Portuguese settlers with stately drives along the Indian Ocean, charming residential areas replete with frangipani and jacaranda trees, impressive banks and shops. It has the sidewalk cafes that in colonial days lured South African tourists for prawns and *vinho verde* and the ambience of "Europe in Africa" - along, of course, with prostitutes of all hues. It also has a magnificent railway terminal alongside the port, where behind the splendour of Portuguese colonial architecture is a history of integration into the expanding regional economy of South Africa.

The road to Matola, the industrial suburb of Maputo where CIM is located passes through stretches of the "reed city". These are crowded with makeshift houses of reed walls with metal sheet roofs. In colonial days, legislative restriction on secure land tenure in urban areas for the black population, coupled with low salaries, kept families from building permanent structures. The years since independence have seen urban housing departments encouraging various urban development programmes. Now swollen with refugees from the countryside fleeing the South African-backed-insurgents, the reed city is teeming with people of all ages, their ragged clothing and bare feet testifying to the ongoing crisis<sup>1</sup>. From a city of 600,000, Maputo's numbers have swollen to over a million.

Matola, with its distinctive skyline of chimneys from the cement factory and tanks from the oil refinery, is visible over the salt flats as you drive the



four lane stretch from Maputo. The occasional city bus that passes is filled to overflowing. More common now are the impossibly overloaded trucks nicknamed "chapa 100" (license plate 100), carrying Matola passengers for 100 meticaís (local currency)<sup>2</sup> instead of the three and a half meticaís fare of the now depleted city bus fleet. Landcruisers filled with foreign personnel and labelled with the insignia of various "development" and "relief" agencies crowd the roads – UNICEF, FAO, MONAP, the massive Nordic agricultural programme and the more recent arrivals, CARE and World Vision.

The route to CIM passes a clover leaf junction leading to light industries producing a range of products from glass and footwear, to textiles and batteries. The heavy industries in Matola include two steel rolling mills and a railway wagon and truck factory. CIM itself, the major food complex for the southern region of Mozambique, is nestled among a series of industries – Petromoc, the oil refinery, a natural gas complex, Mocacor, and the cement factory.

CIM was built with Portuguese capital as a major industrial project in the 1950s. It expanded during the 1960's when the Portuguese colonies were opened up to foreign investment. In its heyday, it was a thriving international operation with offices in Lisbon, Salisbury and Johannesburg. It included a milling complex, a biscuit factory, a sweets factory, a pasta plant and a shipping and handling agency. The photographic archives at CIM give a dramatic depiction of colonial days. Rotund Portuguese managers complete with cigars, point proudly to their new plant, with Aunt Jemima-like women with white kerchiefs handling conveyor belts loaded with biscuits. Men, dramatically whitened with grain-dust, dig through mountains of wheat and maize in the basement of the silos.

CIM's expansion was part of a more generalized boom from the early 1960s to the early 1970s. The enormous expenses of expanding wars in all three of the "overseas provinces", Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau, forced Portugal to seek outside financing. By mid-1965, there was a virtual "open door" investment policy, offering tax holidays, free repatriation of capital and profits, simplified procedures, and no necessary association with Portuguese companies. Promises of capital from western countries were forthcoming. When Portugal announced its five-year development plan for 1968-1973, European and American corporations were expected to provide investments valued at \$171.1 million while Portugal itself was to provide only \$78.5 million. The years from 1968 to 1970 saw an actual increase of much more modest proportions, growing from \$23 million to \$28.5 million, although this was offset by other forms of assistance including a credit loan of \$436 million to Portugal from the United States Import-Export Bank for use

of the Azores military base and military aid channelled through NATO. (Munslow 1983:47)

The main beneficiaries of the "open door" policy, however, were South Africa and Rhodesia. By 1973, South Africa replaced Portugal as the main exporter to Mozambique, with rapidly expanding exports of machinery, spare parts, fertilizer, iron and steel, wheat, potatoes and coal. Mozambique was more and more tightly integrated into the orbit of the South African economy. Both commercial enterprises and urban real-estate expanded considerably during these years. Local production of commodities for the expanding settler community also grew, all of it integrally linked into the regional economic system dominated by South Africa. In the period immediately prior to the coup in Portugal, Mozambique derived 42 percent of its gross national product and between 50 and 60 percent of its foreign exchange earnings from the rand. (Munslow 1983:48)

Most of the factories were modern and well organized, and the industrial sector was substantial – easily outstripping that of neighbouring Tanzania, for instance. But "development" was mainly in end-of-the-line finishing operations rather than the exploitation of Mozambique's natural resources. Thus, the steel rolling-mill brought in rolled steel billets from South Africa and rolled them into reinforcing bars, even though Mozambique has its own iron ore. The oil refinery imported all of its crude oil. The railway wagon and truck factory actually had its buying department in Johannesburg, bringing in kits of material for assembly. The tire factory (built before independence from bank-raised capital but only commissioned after independence) imported all its raw materials. The bicycle factory imported kits for assembly. The huge cement industry imported 50 percent of its raw materials. And so on down to Companhia Vinicola – the Mozambican wine company – which imported its grape concentrate, and to the corrugated galvanized roofing sheet company, which imported flat galvanized sheet. In addition, the amount of wine that could be produced and the amount of cotton that could be ginned and woven were regulated and controlled by the Portuguese to prevent production in the colonies from competing with big capital in the metropole.

(Sketchley 1985:259,160)

Many Portuguese settlers began to flee, even as early as 1973 when it became clear that the colonial system was collapsing. The great majority of these settlers had arrived only in the 1950s, fleeing the poverty of rural Portugal for government-sponsored colonies in the rich agricultural areas of Mozambique. From a white population of under 50,000 in 1950, the settler

community grew to well over 200,000 by 1973 within a total population of about 10 million. The settlers were still first generation immigrants with strong ties to Portugal. In many cases, the agricultural settlement schemes had gone badly. With the impending FRELIMO government as a complete unknown, and with rumours rife, many more joined the general exodus in 1976-77, in which 90 percent of the settler population of 200,000 departed. A handful of Portuguese settlers stayed on, including people in administrative positions in factories such as the Portuguese engineer who was the general director of CIM.

After independence in 1975, as we have seen above, the new FRELIMO government nationalized rentable property, schools and hospitals. Factories and commercial enterprises, however, were not nationalized. Nonetheless, with the general exodus of the settler community, many factories were abandoned and the new FRELIMO government was left with a *de facto* state industrial sector. There were terribly scarce human resources to draw from in appointing managerial and technical staff. The young and inexperienced appointees confronted delicate situations marked by sabotage by the departing settlers and newly hostile South African suppliers.

The situation of the workers was no less difficult. During the chaotic period immediately prior to independence, there were a number of strike actions resulting in substantial pay increases, including a four day strike at CIM. Some of these pay settlements were later recognized as destabilizing tactics by the departing colonizers, happy to leave behind enterprises where there was no hope of high enough production to cover the increased wage bill. The new Ministry of Industry after 1975 found itself with a labour force expecting continuation of these higher salaries. What's more, the workers' demands were entirely legitimate; they had been grossly underpaid.

Production Councils had been established in 1976 as a way to enable workers to play a more active role in the planning and control of production. Their mandate was to increase production and productivity, combat sabotage, fight labour indiscipline and generally promote the social conditions of the workers, including questions of worker health and safety. Alongside the Production Councils were state-appointed administrators, but the lines of accountability between the two bodies were very unclear, the more so when the Dynamizing Group also entered the picture.

Management in the more far-sighted foreign-owned companies such as MABOR, owned by the US company, General Tire, continued to expand production during this period. They established a *modus vivendi* with the FRELIMO government and the new forms of workers power and state

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presence through Dynamizing Groups, Productions Councils, and later Frelimo Party cells and the workers' organization, OTM.

The Portuguese management that stayed on in CIM, however, seems to have had neither the vision nor the means to operate in this way. After 1974, no new investments were made. From 1976, the accounts department ceased to do the books. Neither maintenance nor replacement parts were guaranteed, resulting in a general run-down of factory equipment. Many technicians fled. (Almeida Matos 1985:2,3)

The CIM management was very negative to the formation of a Production Council and basically refused to participate, leaving workers to discuss the running of the factory without inputs from the Administration. They were even more negative to the formation of a cell of the Frelimo Party after the III Congress in 1977 and a period of open struggle ensued. There was a complete breakdown of communication. New administrators appeared, taking no responsibility for the decisions and errors of the old ones. In response to workers' demands, particularly for salary increases, but also for improved working conditions, promises were made which were never kept.

CIM was by no means the only industry undergoing major struggles. The factories taken over by the state were also experiencing enormous difficulties. The situation at neighbouring CIFEL, a steel rolling mill, tells the tale.

Six months after its formation, the twenty-seven man Production Council at CIFEL had de facto control of the factory. But control is the last word to use for a situation in which electric motors were burning out daily because of lack of routine maintenance; where stock records had fallen into disuse and storerooms became disorganized dumping grounds; where production had plummeted from 44,000 tons of steel bars in 1974 to just 6,000 tons; and where, even worse, the scrap rate (the percentage of spoiled and wasted raw material) had risen from 10 percent to over 30 percent. This last point meant that the material – steel billets – was being imported from South Africa in 10,000-ton lots, at US\$250 per ton, and nearly a third of it converted into virtually worthless scrap metal after consuming huge amounts of imported energy. And this at a time when Mozambique did not have enough foreign currency to import food and medical supplies!

(Sketchley 1985:263)

In factories where the Portuguese administration stayed on, the tensions were especially acute. Textlom, the huge modern textile factory on the other side of the main Matola road, went through a difficult period. There too one of the original directors stayed on and a period of struggle ensued with the administration, the Production Council and the Dynamizing Group all vying

for control. In the case of Texlom, an accusation of "racist practices" in the dining room by the Dynamizing Group resulted in a brief strike action. The Ministry of Industry and the party backed the workers' demands in this instance. (Sketchley 1985:270)

The situation at CIM became so complicated by the late 1970's that an initiative was taken by some of the workers to organize a group called the "Grupo de Madodas", (elders group). This group claimed that the Frelimo Party cell was not doing anything to resolve the problems of the workers, particularly in terms of salaries. They advocated direct confrontation with the administration in the form of a strike. (Matsinhe 1985:3)

Given CIM's importance as a major food processing complex guaranteeing basic supplies for the entire southern region of the country, government reaction was not slow in coming. The state intervened, taking over the factory on July 17, 1980, and appointing a new management team. The new general director, Antonio Almeida Matos, brought very high qualifications to the job. He had had the opportunity to complete his university studies abroad and had solid experience from his former positions as National Director of External Trade. He was given additional responsibilities as the director of UDRA, a management unit for the entire food and tobacco sector. A strong team of Mozambican cadres was also appointed to guarantee technical, administrative and social aspects. A new Social Services Department was established to pay close attention to working conditions for CIM workers.

CIM became a model of social progress for workers. Immediate improvements were made, starting with the meal service and daily tea breaks. A small bakery was set up to provide bread for the factory workers. Other services included improvements to the day care center and first aid post, a social fund for workers to cover loans for family emergencies, funerals, etc. a retirement and pension plan, and a school offering adult basic education during work hours. More recently secondary schooling at night, a workers' housing cooperative and the right to buy factory produce, i.e. virtually a second set of monthly food rations have been added.

While the benefits package improved greatly, the salaries at CIM changed very little over the years. Many workers have earned the same salary since 1974. Between 1974 and 1987, the only group to enjoy a salary increase was women. In 1982, CIM eradicated the discriminatory policy that paid women less than men. No woman could make less than the base monthly salary of 3,300 meticaís after this time.

By far the majority of the students doing adult education were in the least skilled jobs in the factory as assembly line workers, handlers, cleaners, etc., earning the base salary. One post-literacy student was a machine operator and

earned 4,000 meticaïs. The assistant to the shops head, doing fourth grade, earned 6,000 meticaïs. A few seasoned skilled workers who had risen to positions of responsibility with the exit of the Portuguese settlers earned salaries of 10-12,000 meticaïs. The senior managers earned salaries in the 16-20,000 meticaïs range.

With the sustained economic crisis of the 1980s, including a rampant black market and soaring inflation, urban wages ceased to have any meaning in terms of reproduction of the labour force. CIM workers had a right to monthly rations of oil, soap, sugar, and cereals (some combination of rice, pasta and maize meal). All urban dwellers with legal place of residence and occupation established had the right to these products for each member of their family aggregate, with total cost of rations per person at controlled prices which were extremely low. For months on end, however, the rations would not be complete, with soap and oil most frequently missing. These absolutely essential commodities were to be found readily on the black market, with a bottle of oil selling at 1500 meticaïs. Other essential items such as clothing and footwear were equally available at even more prohibitive prices. Effectively this forced all wage labourers to complement their wages with other economic activities at nights or on week-ends. No household was complete without multiple esquemas, schemes, some more legal than others, for survival<sup>3</sup>.

There was absolutely no correlation between increased educational qualifications and salaries. The salaries remained constant as part of a more general government policy to freeze salaries and wages, instituted in 1980. This policy remained intact until 1986, when a new salary policy gave considerably more flexibility to management to fix salaries in accordance with qualifications and abilities.

While the salaries remained fixed over the years, the benefits package increased considerably after the government intervention into CIM. CIM workers received daily food and uniforms. Most workers filled their own daily nutrition needs through food provided by the factory. Bread, tea and sugar were provided for morning tea, followed by a substantial hot lunch and an afternoon tea break. What other food came into the workers' households went mainly for the children. Those workers with children in the CIM day care also depended on the factory for nutrition needs for toddlers and under fives. The weight loss for these children during the month of the year the worker was on vacation was dramatic! CIM workers also bought CIM products at controlled prices once a month, including maize meal, pasta, animal feed and sweets. In 1985, they began to buy bread from the factory several times a week.



In addition to CIM's own products, the CIM workers also had the opportunity to buy other products through the factory, including such items as "capulanas" (African cloth), batteries for radios, clothing and food items. To my knowledge no one ever calculated the cost of these items on the parallel market or thought about them as a wage supplement, but there is no doubt that the CIM workers had far better conditions than most workers.

Added to the package outlined above was a loan scheme, a collective marriage plan and a pension plan. In this way the crippling expenses of births, deaths, illnesses, marriages and old age faced by most workers alone, were confronted with relative equanimity by the CIM workers.

Not all workers have the power that we do here. For example, here your husband can die and CIM will do the funeral. For marriages and deaths, CIM is beside us. When a worker dies, his widow can count on support from the factory. She receives his wages for another six months, and in this way gets time to plan her next moves. When you have a son in trouble, you can bring him for CIM to take hold of. There is a ration system outside of the factory. We also have our internal system here inside. We receive everything that is produced here. That's why we have a very tough policy on robberies. When people rob, they have to leave CIM. There is no reason for robberies. We have the right to receive things every month - maize meal, pasta, sweets, chocolate. There is no necessity to rob and workers with a conscience don't do it. These are powers that are not enjoyed in other factories. Our factory is concerned about us. It's not the same in other places.

(Interview with Leonor Benjamin, clerk,  
Workshops January 17, 1986)

Very few workers had Leonor's perspective on the benefits however. As a Frelimo party member and activist, Leonor saw CIM as a benefactor to be counted on by a widow needing to reorganize her life or a mother finding her son without a place for the next level of schooling and needing to find a way for him to continue to study or to work. Most other workers seemed to see their relationship to CIM mediated purely through their wages, and many lamented that they could not get contracts to return to South Africa to work, where, they claimed, you could actually buy something with what you earned. In truth, as the economic crisis worsened, even the generous benefits package provided by CIM was ludicrously small in relation to family needs. The package did guarantee a disciplined workforce, however, with workers present daily at CIM because their jobs at CIM guaranteed at least some survival questions.

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In many neighbouring factories there were grave crises of production. Workers arrived from home having had no food to face a full day of work on an empty stomach. Many arrived late because the factories provided no transport. Often it was merely a question of signing in, as there were production halts for lack of raw materials and, therefore, literally nothing to do. In these situations worker discipline dwindled and the factory hierarchy, knowing it was unable to supply either raw materials to produce things or the social conditions to reproduce the work force itself, tended to be ineffective when confronted with absenteeism, lateness or theft.

Strengthening the adult basic education programme was one of the major social areas tackled by the new management after 1980. This is not to suggest, however, that their arrival marked the beginning of education for adults within CIM. The CIM records are very sketchy but it would seem that even under colonial management, there was some opportunity to do primary schooling in the factory in the final years before the coup. Immediately after the coup, despite the climate of contestation between management and workers in this period, CIM records indicate a lot of education activities for workers. In 1976, there were 247 workers registered in literacy as well as the first four years of primary schooling.

*Table 8: CIM adult education results 1976/1977*

LEVEL	NUMBER ATTENDING		NUMBER PASSING	
	1976	1977	1976	1977
Literacy	110	108	49	22(1)*
1st class	50	65	42	17(1)
2nd class	40	39	30	18
3rd class	25	69	7	34(2)
4th class	22	28	11	15
Total	247	309	139	106(4)

\* Bracketed number refers to women.

*Source: CIM Social Services Archives*

A memo from the Dynamizing Group dated June 4, 1976 gives some indications of events. Carlos Jossias Nhantumbo who was in charge of literacy and the school indicates that since May 3, 1976, the school has had permanent staff teaching. The literacy teacher has had a training course and the other teachers all have at least sixth class. (Nhantumbo: 1976). A report done at the beginning of 1977, however, speaks of the lack of support from the Dynamizing Group during 1976. "Last year we had no support from the GD. It never interested itself in the literacy sector. Only the person in charge has guaranteed the running of this sector". (Report January 2, 1977)

The period from 1978 to 1979, as the crisis between workers and management increased at CIM and as the new state sponsored literacy programme was put in place, is one for which there is little or no data in the CIM archives. In 1978, the First National Literacy Campaign was launched in mid year, with evaluation done only towards the end of 1979. CIM archives give a figure of 377 registered, of whom 86 did the final test, 34 of whom passed. In 1980, the year of intervention by the state, no figures are given for literacy. In 1981, the data available suggested phenomenally high attendance and virtually nobody passing. The number attending literacy according to the archives was 331 with no passes, while 377 attended adult education with only six passing! Angelica Aguilera, the Chilean cooperant who directed the Social Affairs, explained the situation.

During 1981, the school director was completely incompetent. He invented a documentary reality but in fact, there were few people attending classes. That's why the documents refer to 421 illiterates, 331 attending classes and nobody passing. In adult education (fourth class) for the same year the documents refer to 377 attending classes of whom 6 passed. After he left, they found lost certificates in drawers and all kinds of other irregularities. A lot of people had to take the fourth class exam again to regularize their situation and actually receive their certificate.

(Field Notes, January 16, 1986).

Quite significant efforts were put into organizing conditions for the adult education programme by the new management team and CIM could justifiably be proud of its accomplishment in significantly reducing the rate of illiteracy in the factory. A special intensive course for 15 workers in lower management positions was set up at the end of 1981, and from 1982 on, impressive results were made towards eradicating illiteracy.

Measured in terms of what could be quantified, many workers over the years did pass the formal requirements of primary schooling for adults. In 1976, 57 percent of the workforce, then numbering 1400, was illiterate. A

decade later only nine percent of the much reduced workforce of 631 was illiterate.

*Table 9: CIM literacy results 1982-1986*

YEAR	LEVEL	NUMBER EXAMINED	NUMBER PASSING
1982	* Literacy	235	153
1982	Adult education	153	41
1983	† 1st year	140	47
1983	2nd year	150	26
1983	Adult education	88	42
1984	1st year	28	18
1984	2nd year	71	57
1984	Adult education	35	16
1985	1st year	No longer offered	
1985	2nd year	21	10
1985	3rd year	27	7
1986	‡ 1st year	No longer offered	
1986	2nd year	10	8
1986	3rd year	27	12

\* Adult education is the post-literacy programme, meant to give the equivalent of four years of primary schooling.

† Introduction of the first year and second year programmes of the Adult Education Sub-system of the NES (National Education System) with literacy divided over two years.

‡ Introduction of the third year of the NES

Source: CIM Archives

Just after independence, 800 of CIM's work force of 1400 was illiterate. Efforts during 1976 and 1977 reduced the number of illiterates from 800 to 460 by 1978. With the period of internal upheavals just prior to take-over by the state, there are no records to indicate progress in literacy. With the new management team in place, much attention was given to literacy. There were 421 workers still illiterate in 1981; the major efforts to organize schooling made at this time reduced the number of illiterates to 234 in 1982, 140 illiterates in 1983 and 124 illiterates in 1984. At the same time, the hiring policy meant that new illiterates were not being admitted into the factory. By 1986, the work force had stabilized at 630 and the number of illiterates had been reduced to 56, or about 9 percent. The workers who were still illiterate were for the most part in the Mill, nine of them working in the maize section and 18 in the wheat section. They were all involved in shift work which made it extremely difficult to work out a time-table for them.

While undoubtedly the larger process of closing the Biscuit Factory and streamlining production in general included the relocation of less skilled, and often, at the same time, illiterate workers to other factories, still a significant number of workers got their literacy certificates over the years. This stands in marked contrast to national rates which were reduced from 95 percent in 1974 to about 70 percent in 1980, but have tended to remain at that level during subsequent years.

On the other hand, CIM as a major factory in the capital city with an enormous concentration of both human and material resources compared to other workplaces, had still almost half of its workforce without adult basic education completed by 1986. Some 245 workers had still not completed third year (formerly fourth class) and only 55 were enrolled in the third year programme in 1986.

### *Gaining access*

My role as a researcher at CIM had a number of unusual aspects to it. The arrival to do research at CIM came after a long association with Mozambique, dating back to 1972. At that time I became actively involved in solidarity activities, and had contacts with FRELIMO and the opportunity to visit the FRELIMO secondary school in Tanzania during the final phase of the armed struggle. My first visits to independent Mozambique were made in 1976 and 1977, as full-time programme development officer for Oxfam-Canada. These visits included contact with the then current literacy projects. From 1978 to 1983, I was employed on the staff of the National Directorate of Adult Education in Mozambique under the auspices of CUSO. My first contacts

with CIM were in the context of work visits as part of the training department of the national literacy staff.

In 1984, I ended my employment with the DNEA in order to begin doctoral studies. I returned to Mozambique for four months in the middle of that year, however, to complete my contract. The active association with the DNEA continued when, in 1985, I coordinated a four month trip to Nicaragua and Brazil and accompanied the four Mozambican educators who made the trip. The exposure to experiences of literacy in Nicaragua and Brazil was part of their preparation to work in a new pilot project in staff training for literacy and adult education.

My tasks in the DNEA over the years had included working with the team writing and testing the new literacy curriculum introduced in February, 1983. During 1983, and for four months of 1984, I had the opportunity to make regular visits to a number of literacy centers. In 1983, we concentrated on six centers in Maputo province, following closely all aspects of the introduction of the new curriculum. This included monitoring the pre-service and in-service teacher training, the opening of the school year, the monthly functioning of classes including both organizational and pedagogical aspects, the system of evaluation and the process of mobilization for literacy. The literacy centers monitored included a set of rural agricultural cooperatives on Ilha Josina Machel in which most of the members were women, a sugar estate, an oil and soap factory, the state railway, and a citrus farm. The findings from these monitoring activities were fed into a broader research project on "The Problematic of Literacy in Mozambique" carried out by INDE, the National Institute for the Development of Education. (INDE: 1984)

During the four months of 1984 spent in Mozambique, the work in literacy centers included more pedagogical support, including experimentation with teaching methods in response to problems identified in the centers monitored during 1983. Much of my work during this period was concentrated on the literacy center at CIM. The first impressions of literacy work there were strongly positive ones.

Sam [a DNEA colleague] and I went to visit classes at CIM today. I had heard that CIM was impressive but I wasn't prepared for how good it actually was. They call their literacy center a school. It is in a section of the old biscuit factory. The office for AEA (Literacy and Adult Education) is small but tidy and includes a library with some instruction on how to borrow books. The person in charge of AEA was energetic – and quick to take us off to the classes. A whole impression of efficiency predominates.

The class itself was a revelation. The workers come in with a bit of bounce – somehow the body language seems to indicate some fairly positive feelings about literacy in CIM. The lesson itself was tremendously impressive – literally the first time I've seen a lesson properly taught, including all the steps done with care and a lot of participation. The teacher has a very good manner with them. When they acted out the mini-dialogue, they were very shy and the women giggled but they could do it.

There was a chance for some chat with them at the end. I have the impression that spoken Portuguese is no problem for the students but will have to check this out more systematically. We also chatted with the teachers at the end. What a contrast with Fasol<sup>4</sup>, where the teachers seem very mechanical and bored. Here the teachers were really quite open. There seemed to be an easy informality, with Aurelio, the school director. The first year teacher, Lopes, seemed fairly self-possessed but Carlos seemed very shy and a bit overwhelmed with our presence. Let's see how these impressions stand up over time.

(Field Notes May 15, 1984)

While at CIM, I worked with the CIM teachers on two experimental projects. One was the introduction of syllable cards for word formation in small groups and the other was a photo story about the factory done with the first year class. Lopes taught first year at CIM, and like many other teachers we had observed, tended to jump over one of the fundamental steps in the lesson. This was the moment of "discovery" when students were asked to create new words by putting together different combinations of syllables. The manual suggested breaking the key word down into its component parts by writing each syllable separately, showing how each was part of a syllabic family with the five vowels, and then asking students to combine these syllabic families in different ways to create new words.

Normally when the students were asked to look at the syllables on the blackboard and find different ways to combine them into new words, there was a resounding silence. Often the teachers themselves then supplied one or two and jumped on to the next step, feeling much more in control with rote drilling of the reading passage! I suggested to Lopes that we experiment with syllable cards at the next lesson. He assented readily and I brought some along. He was so enthusiastic that he created another set on his own initiative for the next lesson.

The body language of the students in this activity was amazing – a sense of energy and animation in stark contrast to the passive stance habitually adopted when the teacher was the authority figure at the front of the class and

the students in rows. The camera caught the liveliness of the interaction. The words jumped from the table as the syllable cards were moved about. The words formed shifted from the high moral tones of the literacy books to the stuff of real life. One group formed the word, "lotaria" (lottery), their weekly hope to win reprieve from grinding poverty. Another group hesitated to show us one of their words, "pita", which was a slang expression roughly equivalent to "babe". We found that the quickest students rapidly tended to have all the syllable cards grouped around them with the slower ones again playing passive roles. When we did it a second time, we selected stronger students and asked them to write down the words formed by their group on a list, thus challenging them to something slightly harder and giving a chance for discovery to the others.

We wanted to encourage teachers in other centers to try this method, so I asked a DNEA colleague, Sam Barnes, to take photos of the students working with the syllable cards. She spent a day at CIM and took photos of the work with syllable cards and more general shots of the classroom, the director's office, the students and the staff. The photos were left at CIM and when I returned the next week, I was happily surprised to hear that they had been put up in the entrance to the dining hall so that all of the workers could see them. When I saw workers clustered around them as they entered for lunch, it was clear that the photos were of enormous interest. Literacy had become visible and identified as something worthwhile taking place in the factory. They were also put to good use in the nearby literacy teacher training center in Matola, illustrating how to work with syllable cards in small groups.

A few weeks later, Sam Barnes returned to take photos of the workers in their workplaces for use in developing a photo-story about workers in CIM. She took a number of photos of workers in the Pasta Factory, the Silos and the Day Care Center. These photos were taken to class, where the students spent one session working on the photo story. They each chose a photo, and identified who was in it and what that person was doing; then they worked to place them in order, showing how pasta was produced, from the arrival of wheat as the raw material to departure of cases of spaghetti from the Finished Products Warehouse. Finally they created texts to go with each photo, all of which were joined together to form a story. There were lots of moments of laughter and the photos themselves capture the enormous interest and pleasure the activity generated. Aurelio and Lopes took the initiative to put the story up on display in the dining hall. I had a few copies photocopied and left them with CIM. Unfortunately, this work coincided with the end of my stay in Mozambique and there was not time to do more with it.



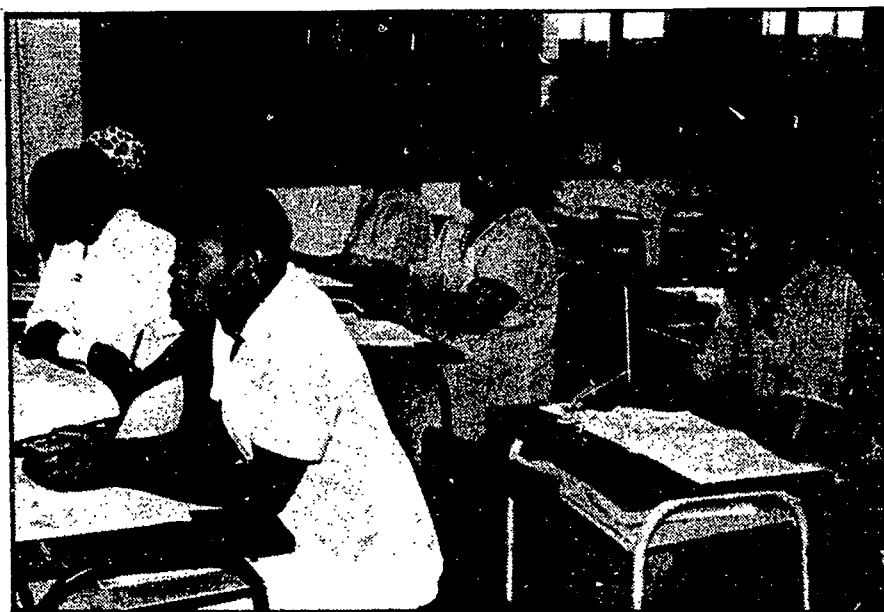


Figure 4: Literacy as "transmission" or "discovery"

On my return to Canada I did multiple copies, and sent them back. The feedback from those who delivered them seemed to be that nobody at CIM knew what to do with them. My impression was that the stories basically remained in the director's office, with nobody taking the initiative to get them to the students themselves.

When I returned to do my dissertation research in 1985, my hope was to concentrate on the rural agricultural cooperatives on Ilha Josina Machel. This offered the possibility of concentrated work on rural women. Already in mid-1984, however, the security situation had not permitted easy access and I had been able to visit only twice during a four month period<sup>5</sup>. On my return at the end of 1985, it was completely impossible to travel by road to Ilha Josina. It became clear that I would have to work in Maputo itself and I then proposed to the Directorate of Literacy and Adult Education that I study two literacy centers, one in the industrial setting of CIM, and the other in the agricultural cooperatives of the Green Zones around Maputo. This proposal was authorized by the Minister of Education and I then met with the Director of Education and Culture for the city of Maputo to outline my research proposal.

I had known him several years earlier when he worked in Nampula province and he gave the research proposal ready assent. It was quite evident from the outset that literacy was not his major preoccupation. While I was in his office, reporters from the national newspaper, *Noticias*, telephoned to ask for a statement from his office on the "clandestine" schools emerging throughout Maputo city. He explained to me later that through a combination of faulty planning mechanisms and a city population swollen by refugees fleeing terrorist actions in the rural districts, there were not nearly enough places in the city schools. Local communities had begun to take the initiative to set up their own schools. The Ministry of Education was having enough difficulty guaranteeing pencils and books, not to speak of trained teachers and some pedagogical back-up, for the official schools, much less the "clandestine" ones. To negate the right of a community to set one up would create huge problems. But to allow these schools to proliferate freely and not be able to supply them with teachers and materials was going to create other huge problem down the line. Amidst this ongoing crisis, literacy for adults was barely on the agenda.

Shortly after my arrival in mid May, I began to spend time at both CIM and at Kenneth Kaunda cooperative in the Green Zones. My transport for the half hour long trip to Matola depended on the DNEA vehicle which was also transporting other DNEA staff to other centers. There were major logistics

problems, which cut deeply into the time spent in the centers during this period. Basically the other staff members were most interested in concentrating on the classes themselves, although the reason for beginning to do the work in the Green Zones was in order to develop a new approach to research in the communities in which the literacy centers were located. This meant departure only in mid-morning for arrival at 11 o'clock classes.

Our different social conditions added to the complications. On the days I went to CIM, a hot lunch was provided. On the days in the Green Zones, it was no problem for me to pack a snack or lunch. This was by no means the case for my colleagues from the DNEA. They depended on the morning tea break at the DNEA for their breakfast and had lunch arrangements, however, precarious, in the area around the Ministry. A full day of work in the literacy centers meant hunger for them, and although this was not always put out officially as the reason, it certainly influenced the scheduling.

In the period from May to July some time was also spent in preparing and carrying out an orientation programme for the four literacy instructors with whom I was to travel to Nicaragua and Brazil. There were three men and a woman, from 25-29 years of age. Three were from the provincial staff, all with 4-7 years of experience in adult education and general secondary schooling done at night. The fourth had gone straight through secondary schooling and was placed in the DNEA national office upon graduation in 1982.

The data and critical insights gained from these four educators as we shared group life and group travel over four months was extremely important. Our visit to Nicaragua coincided with a probing analysis by the Nicaraguans of five years of experiences in popular education. Their general conclusion was that they were moving too much in the direction of formalization, of vertical structures, of top-down programmes and directives with little room for diversity and creativity in response to the differing realities of each region. The analysis of vertical structures was analyzed both with respect to the actual literacy center i.e. teacher-student, teacher community relations, and with respect to relations between colleagues in the various levels of the Ministry of Education. The Mozambican educators found this framework of analysis extremely useful as a way of looking at their own experiences where a very formal hierarchy of power was very much in place.

The process of the trip itself then, the exposure to other ways of thinking about and doing literacy, the necessity to explain their own experience of literacy and for the first time in their lives act as spokespersons for Mozambique, the space away from authority figures and answers to interchanges with

other literacy workers which resulted in more and more questions all resulted in intense critical discussions. These provided invaluable insights for how the Ministry of Education staff itself understood what was being done in literacy.

One of the most powerful themes was the impossible situation of being in the middle of the hierarchy. They spoke, at times with anger and disdain, of how senior level staff simply gave directives to be executed and never stopped talking long enough to hear what was really going on on the ground. So as subordinates caught in the middle, they lived with a mixture of outward deference and internal disdain for the ignorance of their superiors about the real situation. On the other hand, they recounted with hilarity how they, the junior provincial staff, at times went on inspection visits to the districts and reproduced the whole hierarchy there. They were prepared by the provincial senior staff by being told, "When you go there, you are the province. You must demand an account from them for everything we have told them to do."

On our return to Mozambique, I opted to concentrate only on CIM. The earlier period had convinced me of the difficulties in trying to work in the two places, within the limited time frame available, taking into account the severe logistics constraints. I therefore opted to concentrate on CIM, in part because I already had greater access there. Stronger working links had been established and there seemed a greater likelihood of solving the logistics questions by gaining access to CIM transport.

### *Time frame*

The actual field work for the research reported on here took place from May 1985 to April 1986. The study at CIM was done in two phases. The first period of research was from May to July, during which I made regular visits to both CIM and Kenneth Kaunda cooperative as indicated above. During this period I was in the centers on the average four times a week for four hour periods each day.

This was followed by a four month period during which I travelled to Nicaragua and Brazil with four Mozambican middle level staff. The trip was extremely intensive, with a rich programme arranged for us by Nicaraguan and Brazilian educators, as anxious to know about Mozambique's experiences as they were to expose us to their own. It generated an extended conversation, morning, noon and night, during four months of group travel where boundaries between work and time off, the personal and the professional, researcher and informant were blurred to the point of being indistinguishable.

The final period of data collection from January to April, 1986, was spent only at CIM. I was able to get a place in the car pool and from January to mid

April, I arrived at 7:30 each morning and stayed at the factory until 5:00, five days a week. I also went from time to time on Saturdays; once for a voluntary work day and once for a party to celebrate the Fifth Anniversary of state intervention into CIM.

### *Research methodology*

My experiences doing evaluation research in monitoring the introduction of the new adult education system left me both perplexed and dissatisfied. Despite fairly extensive contacts with six centers over an 18 month period, and a capacity to encapsulate in quantitative terms the realities of these centers, we were left baffled as to what the experience of literacy actually meant for those most intimately involved, the women and men actually studying and teaching. We endeavoured in this monitoring project to go well beyond the evaluation framework established in general, based only on statistical control of attendance, punctuality, and the series of tests leading up to the final exam. Our interview forms included questions about the teachers and their training, the frequency and nature of pedagogical support visits, whether books and supplies were actually in place, and how much of the programme of studies was actually completed before people were faced with the final exam. The classroom process itself was minutely monitored, keeping track of the exact time spent on each step of the lesson, noting patterns of response, who talked and how often, whether questions from the teachers were open or closed, etc.

None of this, however, gave opportunity to discover how the women and men coming to (or avoiding) the literacy centers put their worlds together. What did it mean to them to be classified in their workplaces as illiterates? What desires and fears did literacy arouse in them? Did they really acquire new language and math skills, and if so, to what use did they put them? What expectations did they bring of themselves as legitimate participants in particular kinds of language uses? How was this different for men and for women, for blacks and white, for old and young?

With a concern to learn how those doing literacy understood the experience, I decided to undertake the study at CIM using qualitative research methods, and to do an ethnography of CIM. (Spradley:1980; Lofland:1971; Glaser & Strauss:1967; Becker:1970). Doing an ethnography implied adoption on my part of an attitude of complete ignorance of the meanings attached to literacy by the participants themselves. This was not as difficult a starting position as it might seem to be on first glance, given my lengthy history of contact with literacy in Mozambique. The profound silence of the illiterate in

the classroom combined with my limited contacts with literacy students outside of the classroom while I worked for the DNEA meant that, in truth, I did not know what being illiterate or working to complete post-literacy or consciously opting not to do literacy meant for people.

The basic stance, then, was one of seeking out the meanings attached to literacy as a way of understanding how people acted towards it.

The essential core of ethnography is this concern with the meaning of actions and events to the people we seek to understand. Some of these meanings are directly expressed in language; many are taken for granted and communicated only indirectly through word and action. But in every society people make constant use of the complex meaning systems to organize their behaviour, to understand themselves and others, and to make sense of the world in which they live. These systems of meaning constitute their culture; ethnography always implies a theory of culture. (Spradley 1980:5)

The decision to do an ethnography of CIM and not Kenneth Kaunda cooperative in the Green Zones was, in part based on the fact that in CIM, literacy was well established and actually "worked". There seemed little point doing a close study of literacy in a setting where the organizational and pedagogical components were so precarious or indeed lacking that they became the "obvious" explanatory tool. There were plenty of centers with no books, no management support to arrive at a minimally viable time for classes in relation to production, no classroom facilities. At CIM, all of these basic components were well in place and had been for a number of years. Ostensibly it was all to the workers' advantage to make use of the facilities created for study in the work place. Yet still there were major problems with absenteeism and failures. Few people continued on into post literacy. What was the cultural knowledge, the social construction of "self", of "schooling" or "survival" that people were drawing on to organize their behaviour vis-a-vis literacy and interpret their experience.

The decision to do an ethnographic study implied, then, extensive interviewing with those involved in literacy and a role in the factory as participant observer. This new role as participant observer was often a contradictory one, in which my earlier contacts with CIM while working for the DNEA both facilitated and complicated the process.

*My role(s) as participant observer*

On my arrival at CIM in my new role as researcher, it was automatically assumed that I would be part of the staff of the training section which has responsibility for the school. Once I started to spend each day there, I was given a desk in the Social Services Department, where the training section was located. My immediate colleagues were Samuel Zita the head of the training section, and two other staff members. One was Aurelio Tembe, who was still director of the school. The school was now offering Class 6 for the first time and had dropped first year of adult education. Those workers still at first year level were either working in shifts, multiple repeaters or deemed too old. (It was never clear whether this meant too old to learn or too old to make it worth the factory's investment.) The plan was to add Class 7 in 1986 and drop second year. The other immediate colleague was my old friend, Lopes Chigoiane, with whom I'd done the photo story. He was now teaching second year literacy and, at night, a student in sixth class. The training section shared its space with two clerks from the Social Services Department in an inner office that linked the three other offices of the Social Services Department. It was therefore an excellent vantage point for observing the inner workings of one department.

My CIM day began at 7:10 a.m. as I waited outside my apartment in central Maputo for the car pool. The director general and the three directors of CIM all had cars provided for them by the company, and I got a ride with Abdul Carimo, the Director of Economy and Human Resources. Other CIM managers and workers were transported in a fleet of buses and trucks that regularly circled the far-flung residential areas of the city, picking up and depositing workers from multiple shifts.

The car pool included Abdul Carimo, Angelica Aguilera, a Chilean cooperant heading the Social Services Department, and when she left, Manjate, the new head, and Massingarella, a recent graduate of a technical institute. Massingarella was second in command at the mill, headed by Domingos Chinguvo, a veteran worker with fourth class. The morning conversations covered every conceivable subject from bandit attacks to whether capitalist countries had queues, from recipes for banana cakes to Mozambique's potential for growing wheat. Out of these conversations came a strong rapport, particularly with Carimo, and a tremendous amount of general knowledge about the day to day preoccupations of the CIM staff.

I normally spent the first part of the morning at my desk in the training section or in one of the many sections of the factory interviewing and/or observing students. The work at my desk in the training section included



gathering data on enrollment and attendance and exam results, analyzing reports on literacy activities and writing up observations etc. It also included many conversations with Zita and Aurelio and Lopes, since they automatically included me in all discussions and decision-making about literacy during the time I was there. I shared highlights from the interviews with them regularly.

I worked very hard at building up good working relations with the three in the department. I found my role to be one with many complicated aspects. The ease with which I was accepted as a legitimate participant and cast as part of the training department team made it easy to integrate into factory life. On the other hand, it raised expectations that I represented and defended the Ministry programme of adult education just when I wanted to generate conversation in which informants would begin to indicate their own ways of making sense of literacy. I did not want people to tell me what they thought I would want to hear, assuming me to be a representative of the DNEA. It was the more tricky because there was no active district education office presence at CIM. In the whole time I was there, there was only one brief visit by an official from the city staff. Assumptions certainly existed, however, about what the DNEA intended adult education to be.

I think the fact that I constantly raised critical questions in open ended ways and was cast in a training role rather than an inspection role meant that there was little resentment or suspicion of my presence. In addition to sharing observations and data, I also continued to take an active role in problem solving on day to day problems, all of which built up trust and rapport. Going to battle with CIM against the city education officials to get school supplies from the provincial office put me firmly on CIM's side in problem-solving, and this undoubtedly helped to build up trust.

The complexities of playing an insider-outsider role will be explored more fully in Chapters 6 and 7. Also my own locatedness in terms of class, race/ethnicity, gender and age all made an important impact. The reality of the CIM community opened up to me in my extended conversations and interactions with its members is not in any sense the truth. It is a truth, a reality of meanings created by interpretations offered within the context of my own specificity as researcher. A male researcher, a black researcher, a researcher without gray hair, would certainly have triggered a different extended conversation, and hence a different reading of the CIM reality. This question will be explored more fully in Chapter 8.

About 15 hours a week were spent in carrying out interviews. They were done first with all of the students who had been enrolled in 1985, including those who had dropped out. I then extended the interviews to students who

had already completed fourth class, both those who had continued studying and those who had not. I tried to do the interviews in the sections at a slow enough pace that I would have the better part of a week in a given section and thus an opportunity for observation of the work of the section as I carried out the interviews. Normally the shop floor boss would set up a table and chair or a desk somewhere in the section. At times, we simply took chairs outside under a tree. In the pasta factory, the interviews worked out well because the table and chair provided were in the midst of the packaging operations and gave me a good opportunity to observe the assembly line packing bags of macaroni and spaghetti in wrappers. In other cases such as the mill, however, the desk and chairs provided were in the offices of the mill management and the workers seemed to feel quite inhibited. The desk setting, with other "bosses" within hearing distance seemed to set up a power dynamic that had a strong impact on the flow of the interview. There were few interviews done with workers in the Mill, since shift work made it the remaining bastion of illiteracy with few participants in the classes. Those workers with whom I did speak seemed far less relaxed in the interviews, some of which may have indicated distance from any idea of what literacy was all about. At least part of it, however, seemed to come from a setting of having the Mill management team in close proximity.

The first interviews were done with informants I had already come to know through classroom observation as "talkative", and were entirely open-ended. From them, I began to see some recurring patterns and devised an interview form that served as a kind of discussion guide. The interviews normally took one to two hours. It began with a set of factual questions about name, date of birth, etc. (See Annex 1). I could have taken information from the files, but these simple questions seemed to set people at ease. The interview then clustered around work experience at CIM (since when, in what part of the factory, doing what, for what pay), around family education (of parents, siblings, children, including present occupations, value and expectations of education), around languages spoken, read or written, around reasons for wanting to do literacy and feelings about progress in literacy, around participation in other organizations in the factory, and any other areas that emerged, including an opportunity to put questions to me.

One aspect later included had to do with a discussion around the uses of literacy. I discovered in chatting with people about languages spoken and read and written that the post-literacy students were not aware that, having learned to read and write in Portuguese, they could now begin to tackle reading in Changana, their mother tongue. I began to include a simple phrase in Chan-

gana as a way of enabling them to discover that their newly acquired reading skills could be applied to reading their own first language!

From 11:00 until 4:00, I spent most of the time in classroom. observation. The second year classes were held from 11:00 to 1:00 while the two sections of third year met from 11:00 to 1:00 and 1:00 to 4:00. I tried to arrive as the students did, in order to have an opportunity to chat with them informally before the classes began. When the classes started, I sat in one of the desks at the back of the classroom, taking notes about particular aspects of the class.

It was difficult to separate my various observer roles. On the one hand, I was noting down problems and weaknesses in the curriculum materials themselves out of an old role as part of the curriculum team. Secondly I was noting down strengths and weaknesses of the teachers in their handling of the materials, relating this not so much to individual assessments of the teachers from an "inspector" role but more to implications for training and ways to improve the pre-service training courses. Thirdly, I was observing carefully the behaviour of the students themselves. Given the tendency on the part of the teachers to dominate completely each lesson, asking at best closed questions that demanded yes and no answers in chorus, there was little to note down in terms of individual contributions from the students.

One of the staggering aspects as I began to do the interviews was to acknowledge the working hypothesis about illiterate workers I had unconsciously built up, based on classroom observation during my years on staff at the DNEA. Although in my own writing and thinking over the years, I had a perception of African peasants and urban wage earners as wily and stoic survivors of all that colonial oppressors and post-colonial "developers" could heap upon them, I came to realize that in my professional work in the DNEA I had been lured into seeing adult literacy students in a different way. In stark contrast to the earlier era of self-education organized through "People's Schools", the illiterates had become an administrative category, whose "deficiency" was there to be remedied. They were defined top-down, by national, provincial and district education staff, by administrators, by factory and farm managers. Their own self-definition, their own voices, were unheard. The literacy classes we had observed had served only to confirm this perception of the illiterate as passive, inarticulate, lacking in motivation, backwards, deficient.

The 1983/84 work on Ilha Josina Machel had alerted me to some of the forces working on us to shape our perceptions of the illiterate. There we always stayed overnight and had the opportunity to meet the students in their homes and in the community. The contrast between the silence of these

women in the classroom and their stance in their communities and cooperatives was dramatic. The women gave us hospitality, something we as weary travellers received gratefully, very much needing the water and the chair in the shade being offered. They jokingly invited us to join them in their work, and offered us food – cobs of corn or pieces of cassava or sweet potato. Conversations munching on carrots as they were being weighed brought revelations – stories of how the coop members had been overcharged for tractor services and vowed to learn Portuguese in order to manage their cooperative without being cheated, anecdotes about new things you could do when you spoke Portuguese.

I had written up this experience for the DNEA, and talked with colleagues about how our evaluation methodology tended to reduce what we looked for to what we could measure. The rich insights offered during a late afternoon stroll with the teacher, chatting with people as they prepared their evening meal, or during a work session with cooperative members had no place in our report forms and were invisible as data. (Marshall:1984)

Even knowing all that, the reality of the lives of these urban workers shocked me. The interviews revealed women and men struggling desperately to survive a prolonged crisis, passionately concerned about their children, resourceful, inventive, funny. The classroom made all that resilience and resourcefulness invisible. The women and men in literacy were completely silenced by the classroom process, and at many point made to feel and appear stupid by it! A comment from a 33 year old worker in the Silos captured it. Augusto Bernardo Maibasse had worked for six years at CIM on the basic salary of 3,300 meticaís. He had given up his work as a market gardener when inputs like seeds and pumps for irrigation were no longer available with the post-independence breakdown of the commercial network for rural producers.

You could think that people like me don't do things because we don't have the brains. We do have – we think of lots of schemes. But we don't have any money.

(Interview with Augusto Maibasse, February 25, 1986)

The classes included a period of time for written work in each lesson. The manual gave instructions for the teacher to circulate at this time and give individual help to the students. During our visits in 1983/84 as national and provincial staff members, we had opted to join the teachers in making the rounds desk by desk. This was done in part to be able to monitor the kinds of difficulties the students were encountering. It was also part of the in-service

Department. The reflections included a mixture of observational notes, theoretical notes and methodological notes. I tried to take down verbatim or reconstruct what was said with as much accuracy as possible. The notes were a mixture of English and Portuguese.

I tried to pay particular attention to body language. The power relations between the women and the men, between blacks and white, and between workers and management were complex ones. A history of having been made invisible and having been silenced as blacks, or as women or as workers was common to all. I tried to be especially attentive to body language as an indication of ease or anxiety as participants in particular kinds of discursive practices.

I found that the kind of heightened attentiveness to multiple situations was totally draining. The participant-observer role began with the first chit chat in the car pool at 7:15 a.m., included full days of interviews and observing lessons, along with lunch time conversations with various people and chance meetings in the factory complex. The stance of observer continued during the car pool chat until I reached home at 5:45 p.m. It was a totally exhausting situation, one which I probably should have broken up with periods totally away from CIM, devoted to reflections on what I was observing. I felt pressured by time, however, and the need to complete the interviews. I was also aware of the legitimacy, trust and access gained by being a "regular" member of the car pool and the Social Services Department staff and the lunch gossip circuit.

### 1. Enumeration

There were some aspects of the experience of literacy that were accessible through direct, repeated and countable observation. The most obvious one was actual attendance at class, and this I did keep track of through monitoring the attendance records kept by the teachers.

I did not attempt to enumerate student interaction. In our data gathering during 1983, we had developed observation sheets which we filled in meticulously for each class. These included a very minute monitoring of each phase of the lesson which did little to illuminate the ways that the students themselves were making sense of the experience of literacy.

The observations about student interaction in the final report of the research project on "The Problematic of Literacy" carried out during 1983/84 state the problem very clearly.

The part of the lesson devoted to developing oral skills is completely dominated by a question and answer game between the literacy teacher

and students. There is a tendency not to direct questions to particular individuals and to solicit answers in chorus. The questions are almost always closed, and there is almost always a single correct answer accepted by the teacher. If the students don't know the correct answer, the teachers give it themselves and often have the students repeat it in chorus or one by one. Often the Question/answer game does not require complete answers from the students; they simply complete the teacher's sentence with a word or even a part of a word (questions such as "Paulo is working in the gar., in the gar...?" Reply: "...den"). There are also cases where the "questions" only require the students to confirm what the teacher has said (Type: "That's so, isn't it?" Reply: "Yes.") Many times the teacher demands a repetition of the same reply from many students.

In the classes we observed, it was rare to find activities that went beyond reaction by the students to more active participation through:

- small group work
- free conversations
- personal intervention by the students (the rare interventions were almost always questions of clarification)

With the exception of dialogues between students and some "private" conversations, there was no interaction among the students. The interaction within the teaching/learning process was determined and directed exclusively by the teacher. This was combined with the fact that the teachers spoke a lot, literally drowning the students with detailed accounts and superfluous explanations that, for many students, were difficult to follow in Portuguese.

(INDE 1984:13,14)

The CIM classrooms were no exception. The daily routines allowed little space for student intervention except to give negative or affirmative responses to closed questions or to go through stylized rituals of questions and answers at a level of abstraction removed from their immediate lives. Once I began the interviews and began to have a sense of some of the meanings of literacy to the students, I was even more confirmed in my decision not to go through the arduous process of monitoring each lesson in this way. I did, however, collect other quantitative data including age, schooling records, employment records and family education and employment data.

## 2. Interviews

Interviews were carried out in phases. I began with the workers who were registered as doing literacy or post-literacy, at CIM in 1985. This involved seeking out the 52 women and 62 men who were registered in post-literacy, including those who had dropped out. In a second phase, I extended the



thus hide their own incompetence. The second had to do with Mozambican culture. Nobody speaks directly with the "regulo" [local chief]. You always go through intermediaries before you finally get to him.

(Field Notes January 7, 1986)

Three work sessions were proposed, and the first one took place on January 17. Mario Morais could not be there but a group of fourteen people including management, party, and representatives of the organizations of workers, women and youth were there. I had planned it in my best "popular educator" style with plenty of participation, fresh from multiple sessions in Nicaragua using these methods. I envisaged a quick introduction of myself and how the idea of the sessions had emerged. Then I planned to ask those who had come to work in smaller groups, looking at the experience of literacy at CIM over the past decade and analyzing the successes and difficulties with respect to participation, teaching materials, incentives, the role of women in literacy, and the role of the Party and the mass organizations in literacy. The results of the small group sessions were then to be discussed collectively, followed by a slide tape presentation on the experience of literacy in Mozambique. The slide tape show was one I had developed for use in Canada, but had shown to colleagues in the DNEA with some success.

Delays in arrival got us off to a late start. The work in the small groups was done, although not in a particularly dynamic fashion. In truth, few of them had anything to say about what was happening in literacy because they were really distant from it. In addition, what Nicaraguans do at the drop of a hat, organizing themselves into a small group to discuss a particular problem, is rare in Mozambique these days. In the immediate post-independence era of the GDs, many such discussions took place. Now the very idea of an unstructured discussion, without guidelines set and the "correct answer" signalled was already highly novel. We had started so late that I decided to do the collective discussion of the results of the small group discussions during the next session. The slide tape show captured people's interest, but I was struck by the fact that, for many, it was the first time they had ever seen slides used in this way. They were really bowled over by visual presentations of their reality in and of itself, leave aside content, never mind critical analysis.

Today was the day for the second work session with the OTM. I had prepared for it, already feeling that the thing was not going to go. I got there and nobody had come. I, of course, interpreted it as all my fault. I must have done the first session badly.

Second thoughts allowed that it might not have been all my fault!. Underlying it all is a lot of uncertainty from the OTM as to what this is



all about. They have a lot to do – and this thing of literacy is not seen as a top priority. It was definitely Mario Morais' enthusiasm that got it established at all, and when neither he nor the secretary of OTM came to the first session, the thing weakened.

It's interesting. Everything that you do to establish a process less authoritarian, less directive, appears as a signal of uncertainty as to how to proceed, almost as weakness. The expectation is for something already defined, with a leader providing all the answers. When the one doing the session signals another way of working, it becomes difficult. My refusal to play the role of expert was hard for them to understand.

OJM, the youth organization, has no idea about literacy. The two OJM women who came, both of whom work in administration, were totally at a loss to know why they had been sent. Seemingly it had never entered their heads that literacy was something OJM could/should play a role in. The OMM sent Amelia Cossa from the sacks warehouse. She is an OMM activist and someone who completed fourth class in the CIM literacy programme a few years back. She was very timid when faced with the group who came to the work session.

There in the warehouse, Amelia is a dynamic, even aggressive lady. When I went there with beer cans to be made into cups last week, she was in a teasing mood, and wanted to know why I hadn't brought them full cans. She demanded to know when I was coming to interview her. There in the warehouse, she obviously feels in control. As the only woman who has managed to do fourth grade, she feels stronger than the women still doing literacy. Put the same woman in a meeting with the senior managers and she signals stress dramatically. I was struck by the body language, a timidity, a silencing – a tremendous contrast to her aggressive presence last week as queen of the sacks warehouse.

(Field Notes January 23, 1986)

Work session two failed. There were a couple of abortive attempts to re-schedule it with the OTM people, and then I decided to leave it. The Secretary was absent almost constantly, working to organize a big meeting of their branch of workers in the food industry. I decided that if it was a high enough priority for them, they would get back to me. If it wasn't, I certainly did not want to force it on them. They didn't!

### *Methods of recording data*

Small black notebooks which could fit unobtrusively into my rather large purse were the main tool for recording data. I took down notes of the activities observed as they happened, and then interspersed these with reflections on them during the periods of each day at my "desk" in the Social Affairs

training for the teachers, demonstrating a style of interaction based on support, discovery and encouragement rather than judgment and/or supplying the "correct" answer. I chose to follow that same style, using this opportunity for individual contact and encouragement. It was also a survival mechanism for me – since, otherwise, I would have had a period of two and three hours of sitting and observing a process that was never very dynamic and often painful and infuriating because it was so antithetical to what we had envisioned when we wrote the materials.

I tried to use each walk from one section of the factory to another, and the daily stroll from the school at one end of the extensive factory complex to the dining room at the other as an opportunity to talk informally to as many people as possible. The lunch break was the only time that was generally recognized as "free time", when it was legitimate to stop and talk to people. Conversations struck up with workers at other times, apart from those in the context of the interviews, were always carried out with a note of tension. With middle and upper management, there was no problem, but with workers themselves, stopping work to talk to the researcher necessitated "permission". In order not to get the workers in trouble, or my colleagues in the Social Services Department, who were not supposed to let a "stranger" roam the premises at will, I tried to maintain the ground rules of seeking formal permission before entering a section and limiting chance contact with workers to break times. This is not to suggest that the workers did not arrange plenty of moments to talk among themselves apart from the lunch hour, but only to indicate that the highly visible conversations with the foreign researcher were mutually recognized as likely to cause problems.

The final hour each day at CIM found me back at my desk. This was usually spent in beginning to write up observations about the day's events and interacting with the level of excitement of the Social Affairs Department in late afternoon as bread was delivered for the workers to take home. This supply of bread to workers was a new feature of factory life after the opening of a commercial bakery as part of the complex. Given the acute shortages of food, bread distribution became the high point of each afternoon's activities, with a flurry of arrival, distribution, payment for fluctuating numbers of loaves and wrapping to take home. Since the Social Services Department controlled the general distribution, it often ended up with a surplus – which meant another flurry of calculations, distribution, payment and wrapping.

Sorting out my role as participant observer, then, was not always easy, nor always of my own choosing. During the first weeks of the research, I happened to sit down in the staff dining room beside Mario Morais, a senior

Ministry of Labour staff person doing a study at CIM. Morais was also a senior official in the OTM, the Mozambican Workers Organization. He was immediately very enthused about my study of literacy at CIM. His concern was for the OTM to learn, through the presence of an "expert" in its midst, how to give effective support to literacy. His first question to me was "What are the appropriate indicators to know how things are going in literacy?"

He was very aware that when the OTM was asked what it was doing about literacy in a given workplace, the OTM representative simply went to management. Management indicated how many classes there were, how many registered, how many passing and failing, and the OTM proceeded to report this as what OTM was doing in literacy. Morais was sure there were other indicators – and I fed in immediately some of my initial observations, and what I thought it might begin to look like if OTM seriously defended the right of the worker to study. I alerted him to the real organizational problems and the number of workers who could not attend classes regularly because of work demands. I also alerted him to serious organizational problems in the ministry, such that students at times faced exams for which they hadn't had the books. I also mentioned the lack of shop floor motivation, and the desirability of shop floor bosses working out training programmes through which the workers could know that by getting their fourth class certificate, they could do vocational training programmes that could increase their skill as workers and result in more interesting jobs.

Today Mario Morais caught up with me as I went off to an interview and introduced me to Comrade Tembe who is responsible for organization in the OTM, and Comrade Inacio who is a party assistant. He proposed to them that they make use of my presence at CIM to organize a series of work sessions on literacy. These would look at what literacy is, reasons for absences and failures etc. The response of Tembe from OTM was very bureaucratic. He said he would inform the OTM Secretary and have him indicate someone to monitor what I was doing. Mario said he disagreed – and explained that he was hoping for a more informal process. He also wanted to be present himself and proposed work sessions in which, without undue concern for hierarchies, everybody would participate actively.

He then gave some interesting observations about Mozambique, speaking of errors made since 1975 in formalizing things, establishing hierarchies. He recounted a conversation with Macamo, the Secretary General of the OTM about all of this. Macamo, according to Morais, offered two reasons for the excessive formalities. The first was that OTM officials insisted on formalities as a tactic to maintain inaccessibility and

interviewing to every worker who had completed fourth class at CIM, whether continuing to study or not. A few of the students currently registered and fairly large number of students who had completed post-literacy were unavailable for interviews. These included workers who had died, were on sick leave, were on maternity leave, had retired, been fired, been transferred to other sections of the enterprise, etc. In all, more than 100 interviews were completed.

The interviews were done using an interview form developed on the basis of several unstructured discussions. (Appendix 1). Answers were taken down verbatim. I had expected to use a tape-recorder, but found that the level of anxiety about speaking with a stranger and speaking Portuguese were sufficiently high that a tape-recorder, however unobtrusive, was going to intimidate people. I therefore opted to work without a tape recorder.

I also anticipated having to use a translator, based on an appreciation of the level of spoken Portuguese in the literacy classroom, particularly amongst the women. In fact, I found this necessary only with one woman amongst all the interviewees. By and large, all of the literacy students, including the women, were perfectly able to converse in Portuguese in a one-to-one situation talking about concrete realities of their lives. I tried to draw them away from worries about speaking Portuguese by starting with very simple factual questions to which they did know the answers, and often having them do a math sum to figure out the year of their birth or their age. They tended to be able to do these sums with no difficulty and this helped them to relax and stop worrying about whether they could speak or not. I also put an enormous amount of body language myself, particularly through facial gestures, into encouraging them to speak, lauding their efforts, however modest.

The only occasion when an interpreter was needed occurred with a woman in the pasta factory and here a female colleague who had completed lower secondary in the CIM school offered to interpret. The colleague also instinctively reacted to the situation, giving lots of encouragement during the conversation. At another of the early interviews, Aurelio, the director of the school was present. He sat in on an interview with an older woman who was having some difficulty with Portuguese and seemed to be indicating that she had been in literacy for the last six years without passing. I noted this down, and was planning to check the records later. At that point Aurelio intervened in a very authoritarian manner, telling her that this was impossible because they didn't allow people to keep registering like that year after year. I steered the conversation quickly in another direction and had to bring the interview to an abrupt halt.

On the way back to the office, I spoke quite strongly with Aurelio about how inappropriate I thought his intervention had been, and how much this stance of men intimidating women just feeds into women's sense of an incapacity to speak. In retrospect, I probably should have been more gentle and/or judicious with Aurelio. He probably reacted because he was putting me in a Ministry official role and saw this as potentially damaging to him. He could have been criticized for not carrying out the rules properly, letting people register even after multiple failures. I found that on the one or two occasions when a man played an aggressive role with a woman in a situation created by my research, I really reacted strongly to defend the woman. Happily my working relation with Aurelio didn't seem to be any the worse for the strength of the criticism.

The interviews were generally very positive experiences, with feedback from various students, particularly among the women, commenting with satisfaction on my interest in their lives. I soon realized that most of them did not know that, once literate in Portuguese, they could also begin to tackle reading in their maternal languages. I used the interview to help them discover this – often a very emotional moment. Unfortunately, it was difficult to follow this up and to know how much they actually put it to use.

For me, this was yet another indication of how seriously off the track literacy was. Far from being a process of acquiring skills that allowed greater communication in one's own social world, using newly learned language skills to write letters, read street signs and hospital forms or speak in public gatherings, the language skills acquired through literacy seemed to focus only on passing an exam and having access to the next level of the schooling system.

Once the interview had taken place, the daily contact with the worker interviewed changed dramatically. There was now a basis of contact. The interview included space for the students themselves to pose questions, and the invariable query was why I was asking all these questions. I explained that I was also a student and wanting to do a study on literacy, in order to see what worked and what didn't so it could be done better. I did not pick up any negative reactions to being analyzed for somebody's research project – in part, perhaps, because my roles of support and encouragement, both in the classroom and larger factory context, were already so well established for the workers. The interview with Domingos Nofre, head of the tailoring unit, in his upstairs shop with bolts of khaki in blues and greens and oranges for workers' coveralls was indicative of worker response to the interviews. The interview included a lengthy discussion about how he had learned tailoring –



Figure 5: Farewell to the researcher at CIM



### 5. Discussion Documents

After a very short period at CIM, it became evident that the training section staff was the only group with any contact whatsoever with the literacy center. Officially literacy was conceived as a programme with tri-partite responsibility, with pedagogical activities in the hands of the Ministry of Education staff, administration in the hands of management and mobilization/organization in the hands of the Frelimo Party and the mass organizations. In practice only the management through the Social Services Department with its training section was involved with literacy on a day to day basis.

There was a time when the level of mobilization for literacy was much higher. Not a week passed without some visitor to CIM – from the city education staff, from the party, from the women's organization – everybody talking about literacy. Now we're on our own. Months pass, even years, without anyone from outside appearing here to talk about literacy.

(Conversation with Abdul Carimo,  
Director of Economy and Human Resources,  
Field Notes January 19, 1986)

I decided, in part on observing that nobody ever visited the school or related to literacy except the training sector staff, and in part on the basis of small group discussions with representatives of management, party and mass organizations in the context of the OTM initiative, that setting up individual interviews to get at the link of party and mass organizations to literacy would not go far. The world of the illiterate and the classroom experience were absolutely unknown to most. I therefore decided to prepare a discussion document, using the data from my observations and interviews, including photographs. The document would attempt to pick up the main themes voiced by the illiterates themselves, and as such provide a mirror into the experience of literacy to which management, party and mass organization officials could respond. The elaboration and circulation of two discussion documents about literacy became an important component of the research. (Appendix 1). These served as an effort to give voices to the illiterate about their experiences of literacy, and make the lives of the women and men in literacy visible to a number of institutional actors in the factory for whom, otherwise, the illiterate were simply an administrative category.

The first document, entitled "Problematic Areas in Adult Basic Education, CIM", was prepared in February, and circulated to training staff, teachers, management, party and mass organizations. [See Annex 3]. The paragraph to introduce it was as follows:



The workers' feast had been well organized with multiple points throughout the factory grounds where they could turn in their tickets for food and beer. When I arrived to take pictures, they were clustered in their multi-coloured coveralls in small groups all over the factory grounds, with plates of meat and rice and the full ration of 4 bottles of beer and an equal number of pop. Each group was anxious to pose – and the women and men from the classes arranged themselves with care with their special friends, all amidst much laughter, bottles visible. From each pocket, plus another raised to their lips. Others posed with flowers, or with arms around other workers. Many women posed with special women friends and no men. A number of the men seemed to use the moment to embrace a female colleague.

I remember thinking it a strange moment. I had never felt so close to the workers, entering into their fun, their way of celebrating a happy occasion with food and drink. On the other hand, I had never felt so distant from them. For the camera, they acted out an intense fantasy life of themselves enjoying "the good life" – bottles of beer protruding from every pocket, full plates of food at hand, a woman within arm's reach. This was particularly true of the men. The distance between their fantasies and their daily lives was enormous. The "good life" pose was far removed from their accounts of the wearying burdens in their home situations – night raids by the MNR, homes without food, children without shoes or places in school.

These party pictures were also put on display and had many laughing groups delaying their lunch to delight in their colleagues' outrageous poses. Afterwards, they were given to the workers, who were extraordinarily pleased to have them. Presumably the photos played a role that words couldn't have, signalling some kind of solidarity with their lives on the part of the strange Canadian woman who could have stayed inside with the special guests but came outside to see the workers' party and give it back to them in photos.

The CIM Photo Archives – Today and yesterday I went through albums and envelopes of CIM photos. Fascinating in so many ways. First, they are, by and large, of the higher ups or of equipment – technology without the worker, machines but the human factor invisible. Almost everything is either official visits or parties in colonial times, complete with fat-bellied, cigar-smoking Portuguese bosses, their dolled up wives and children. Some even include Santa Claus. Interesting to see the old factory lay-out. In colonial days, the present small staff dining room was the management bar. The present workers' dining room in that era was the staff dining room, almost entirely white in complexion with the odd mixed hue thrown in. I asked someone where the workers used to eat and was told that they used Warehouse 2 in those days.

One series was taken during the transitional government, just before independence. It shows the Portuguese factory manager, presumably the one who didn't leave immediately, showing a group of FRELIMO leaders around. It includes Chissano, Guebuza, Monteiro and Carvalho [now President, and Ministers of Transport, State Administration and External Trade, respectively] looking young and informal – a far cry from the formal dress they wear today as ministers. The more recent pictures like the opening of the new mill in 1983 also tend to be of the “grand ones”. There are a few contact sheets with photos of workers, and a few dramatic scenes of workers shovelling grain in the silos but the majority are of occasions when the director and official guests predominate. I know that the *Tempo* [weekly magazine] and *Noticias* [daily newspaper] archives have a lot of photographs of CIM workers – amazing dramatic photos of workers covered with flour, dark eyes shining out. Still, it is interesting to think about the social images in the factory archives, and the continued predominance of machinery and managers over workers and the labour process, even when a socialist project is on the agenda.

(Field Notes March 9, 1986)

The final occasion for photographs was the good-bye party that marked my departure from CIM. A photographer friend already familiar with CIM came for the occasion and took a wonderful series of photos, capturing the air of festivity that prevailed. Once again, these were displayed, and once again, were given to the workers. The letter of appreciation that arrived from Senhora Celeste some months later points to the enjoyment they provided.

Esteemed Senora Judith

How are you? We are well. My children are well. Senora, we are always happy when we receive your letters, but since I don't know how to write, it is difficult for me to write to the senora. This time I will. I hope this finds you in good health. The classes are going well, even natural science which used to be difficult. Now it is more or less OK because we are talking about diseases that we know like malaria, tuberculosis, and others. Portuguese and mathematics are also OK. I am going on vacation very soon but will return before the exam.

Senora, I have a souvenir of you. Do you know what it is? It's the photograph of the good-bye party when we were dancing together. It is really beautiful. I send greetings to all your colleagues at work and to your family.

I am your colleague,  
Celeste Tembe

(Letter from Celeste Tembe, cleaner,  
Milling Section, October 10, 1986)

but also math and reading and writing – while working in the shop of an Indian trading family during his late teens. The shop was in Maxixe, a district of Inhambane right next to Morrumbene district where I had recently spent the Christmas vacation. I had visited small localities where shops like the one he had apprenticed in were abandoned by the Africans who had taken them over after independence. They had fled from attacks by the bandits but I could still see clearly the architecture of colonial exploitation. There was a spacious shop area, with broad shelves for displaying the goods desired by peasant producers, and a large floor area for sacks of cashews and copra. Places for weighing scales and tailoring were pointed out. Attached to the shop was a comfortable living area for the owner and his family. The walled courtyard in behind was cemented for drying the cashews and copra bartered from their peasant producers, with large storage sheds along the back wall. The beauty of a large mango tree and several orange trees gave a strange respite from the nakedness of the exploitation and the sadness of abandonment.

It was easy to imagine Domingos Nofre as a young apprentice in such a scene and I plied him with questions about how it had been. He spoke of learning math by leaving his sewing machine to serve peasants bringing in their harvests. Nofre would have had to calculate what quantities of capulanas (African cloth), shoes, kerosene lamps, blankets and needles could be traded for the sacks of copra or cashews hauled in. At the end of the conversation, we were both on a high. I felt as if I had been close to the hub of the rural economy in colonial times, a reality the more interesting to reconstruct in the present crisis where commercialization of peasant crops has so totally broken down, in part by the bandits but also for lack of an effective form to replace the trader and his family, so finely tuned to locality desires. Nofre was clearly pleased to have had a chance to tell about it.

Thank you very much, senhora, for coming to talk to me. Nobody has ever asked me about all of these things since the time I came here to work. I think people here at CIM think that I began working when I came here – when in fact I had already done a lot of things before I came here.

(Interview with Domingos Nofre,  
Head, Tailoring Section March 21, 1986)

I felt uneasy at times, wondering if I was being manipulative by presenting such a smiling presence, such attentiveness to both the profound and the trivia of multiple lives, very much aware that I wanted their trust in order for them to open up. At another level, I felt that I had proved my commitment with many years of hard practical work in literacy behind me. Undue qualms about using people for my "academic career" seemed best put to rest.

### 3. Document Analysis

Roughly 350 hours were spent going through past literacy records to trace the histories of individual students, correlating progress in literacy with changes in responsibility and remuneration. These included attendance registers and documents in the literacy files. The files were well maintained from 1981 onwards but seemed very incomplete for the period from 1976-1981.

An important source of information for tracing the link between schooling and changes in employment was the new individual record system tracing advances in education and professional qualifications in relation to placement and pay scale. These were kept only for workers with their primary school certificate, however, and therefore irrelevant for almost half the workforce.

Reports about literacy activities were made readily available, although in many cases the documentary evidence hid as much as it revealed. The documents, for example, indicated that in 1981, nobody passed in a class of 331!. Official accounts maintain this. As indicated above, it was a conversation with Angelica, the former head of the Social Services Department that clarified the situation in terms of an incompetent school director.

### 4. Photos

Photos, as I have indicated, were used in my work at CIM quite extensively, both for teaching and training purposes and to stimulate interest in literacy. When I returned to do fieldwork, I found the photo stories I had had reproduced in Canada for individual distribution. I suggested that we give copies to all of the current students, and to all of the workers whose pictures were in them.

I had been baffled in Canada when I heard that they were not being distributed. After the more extended period of contact with schooling at CIM, I felt certain that people genuinely had had no idea what to do with the photo story. The idea of a supplementary text, of simply providing the students with something to read about their lives that was separate from the "giving" and "receiving" of packaged lessons within the classroom itself, was so totally foreign that truly nobody had known how to react.

When I returned to do fieldwork at CIM, I was remembered amongst other things for the photos. Shortly after my arrival back, plans began to emerge for celebrating the fifth anniversary of state intervention in CIM. The workers were tremendously enthused about the occasion, particularly about the party fare of food and beer. They asked me to take photos. I brought along a camera, and ate my own lunch inside with the special guests on the run in order to get outside and take pictures of the workers.

This document sets out various problematic areas in literacy and adult education that have emerged throughout the first phase of research at CIM. The identification of these areas is based on the interviews and observations from May to August 1984, May, June and December of 1985 and January of 1986. The research methodology presupposes full participation of the various people and institutions involved. To that end, I have written this discussion document, making visible some of the meanings that school has for the workers and some of their expectations of what it means to know how to read, write, count and speak.

(First Discussion Document:1985)

The document consisted of 10 problematic areas. They were:

1. Varied expectations and meanings of literacy.
2. Literacy certificates in relation to jobs and wages.
3. Women and schooling
4. Literacy and reproduction
5. Women and inferiority complexes
6. Literacy and production
7. Programme completion
8. Languages
9. Teaching as knowledge transmission
10. Literacy with administrative/bureaucratic or political methods

The document triggered various kinds of responses and was an important tool in generating discussion about literacy at multiple points through the CIM structures.

A second discussion document was prepared as reactions to the first were emerging. It was circulated in late March and focused on five main problem areas. The second document was much less open-ended in setting out problem areas. It focused on five specific questions with fairly explicit suggestions of other ways of dealing with the problems raised. The five areas were:

1. Virtual eradication of illiteracy at CIM except in the mill.
2. Current challenge – shifting to the battle for fourth class (third grade)
3. CIM school – imitation of a general secondary school or opportunity to develop a new form of labour education and training
4. Women workers – double shifts rule out post literacy
5. Literacy and the broader social process

Carimo, with whom I had daily contact in the car pool, and with whom I had already talked a lot about literacy, responded to the first document the day after he'd received it, saying he'd read it but wanted to think about it more. He gave a written response a few days later and then suggested a meeting to talk about it. His written response consisted of 14 points emerging from the document, ranging from organizational problems to the need for more information on family planning. Most of them simply underscored points raised in the document. There were several new angles. One was the concern of the management to reorganize the work process so as to end hard physical labour. It was clearly not so simple. On the one hand, the workers complained of the hard work and dreamed of being transferred to other sections. On the other hand, Carimo recounted that the introduction of mobile conveyors for grain handling had met with worker resistance. They had seen the conveyors as a technological innovation with potential to threaten jobs.

Carimo also suggested family planning education as important in solving women's access to literacy. The general director, Almeida Matos, had already recounted, however, that in the early days of that Social Services Department, Ministry of Health staff had been invited to come to CIM and work with the women workers on family planning education as a form of combatting absenteeism. The general conclusion was that women were the wrong target group. There was no resistance from the CIM women, but almost all of them pointed to negative reactions from their husbands as the main impediment to spacing their families.

In going over family histories of education and/or progress in literacy, it became abundantly clear that most of the women at CIM give birth every two years. I asked them quite often if they wanted to have more children. Many said no. When asked if they knew how to stop having children, the usual response was, "Only God will decide". Often we discussed further how to space children, and the women clearly had only very vague ideas about family planning. Many of them assumed an operation as the only way and feared "the knife." These very intense discussions about different methods of contraception often ended with a sigh of resignation and the comment that, when all was said and done, their men would not allow it.

Another interesting point underscored by Carimo was the need for the lessons to break out of a daily routine, using things like slides. What made it interesting was that Aurelio, reading the comments, really picked up on this one. Seemingly, if the director said that breaking out of the daily routines of "giving" classes was important and suggested using things like slides, this made it OK. Did he feel authorized to do what he would have liked to do

anyway? Or did he feel directed to do what, left to his own devices, he wouldn't have done because it took more work? For whatever the reasons, Aurelio picked up on it.

Finally, at his own initiative, Aurelio suggested we talk about pedagogical work. He mentioned that Director Carimo had pointed to the need to break out of routines, and he had already looked at the second year material and was into the idea of study visits and slides. People have so little experience of pulling these things together – on the other hand, the Industrial Director, Cardoso, manages to organize videos for training. Anyway, we went through the eleven units of the second year programme with ideas for enriching each one of them – visits to a nearby textile factory, videos on diarrhea and people's tribunals, photos, panel discussions with veteran workers from CIM, documents. All of them involved a bit of work, setting up resources, machines etc. I gave him the name of a colleague in the DNEA as a back-up. Let's see if it goes anywhere. Aurelio was worried still about the higher-ups – how to present it to them, how to justify it pedagogically. If he succeeds, it will be a miracle!

(Field Notes March 8, 1986)

When the discussion documents were given to management and party people, I did not suggest a way to respond to them. I judged it more appropriate to let them take the initiative themselves in terms of how to respond. By the time people were reacting to the first document, the second document was already in circulation.

Cardoso, the Industrial Director, also gave a written response to the first document. It was positive, praising the clarity of the picture the document gave of literacy at CIM – “like an x-ray”. He liked its use of first-hand testimony and suggested the document be circulated to the political and organizational structures so that they could tackle some of the problems raised. He also proposed further discussion about how to develop education at CIM, the link between education and professional training, a cost-benefit analysis of education and other country's experiences in this field.

He was much more highly enthusiastic, however, about the second document, leading me to think that the first response was more a “correct” response, what he assumed I as an educator would want to pursue further. His enthusiasm seemed very contradictory to me. He strongly applauded my recognition that workers at that moment didn't see studying as a priority *and* also liked my suggestion of guided individual study as a way out of time-tabling difficulties for those doing shifts!



Cardoso chatted with me today as we waited for transport. He said he really liked the second discussion document and thought it much better than the first. He said he was surprised that in just a few months I had succeeded in understanding something that others had taken ten years to understand. "Angelica [former head of Social Services department] still doesn't understand up to this day. The fact is, adults don't want to study. Angelica always insisted that they were prevented from studying. But with all the social problems they face, with the situation surrounding them, studying is the last thing in the world they want."

I almost had the impression that the unsayable had been said, and in writing, "Adults don't want to study." The document, in fact, made that statement in a very specific context, arguing that adults consciously choose not to study, weighing that benefit over against other calculations about how to guarantee their own and their family's survival.

(Field Notes, March 5, 1986)

The two documents were sent to the Director General towards the end of my stay. A written response was also received, basically expressing interest in the observations and suggesting that I make further suggestions, particularly about how the school could become not simply a copy of city high schools but a real center for worker education and training.

The thoughtful comments from the management were in striking contrast to the response from the party and mass organizations. Both documents went to the head of the OTM, who during this period was spending lots of time away from CIM organizing other activities. When I finally spoke with him one day about suggesting we get together to talk, he agreed readily and said he would read them over the week-end and we could talk on Monday. I went by his office on Monday, and rather than talking or setting up a time to do so, he simply told me, "I agree with everything you've said in the document."

I was left with how to interpret this. Simply a moment in his life when he was so stressed with other commitments that there was genuinely no time. Or perhaps a reaction to a researcher who was a foreigner raising these difficult questions. At some level he recognized my legitimacy in being there; at another, he was at a loss to know how to respond.

I suspect that the fundamental problem was uneasiness at being asked to respond to something so non-directive. The documents were not proposals for solutions but statements of problem areas, many of them deep-set ones like the very real collision course between production demands and demands for schooling. This one had no simple solution. I suspect that he was not used to thinking problems through critically without directives from elsewhere as to how to deal with them. Nobody had told him he had to do something about

literacy, either from higher up in OTM or within the factory management and party structures. That sense of ownership of literacy from the Dynamizing Group days was only a distant memory.

For sure it is the insights gained from spending four months with the four provincial staff people in Latin America that make me situate his answer in these terms. Their tales about how you function in the middle of a bureaucratic structure makes me recognize the mind-set of taking on only what a superior gives you a directive to take on, and closing off all your own critical faculties and initiatives.

Fenias, the head of the CIM Frelimo Party cell was also away constantly during the period that I was there. He had been given a major task in organizing a branch conference of OTM, and was on that almost full-time. I spoke with him over lunch at various times but never in depth. The first document was left for him in his office and mentioned in passing once or twice in the dining room.

I lunched with Fenias, the head of the party cell, last week and made use of the opportunity to talk about the research. He is extremely busy just now with conferences of various branches of the OTM. Once again you see how state, party and mass organizations are totally intertwined, with everyone wearing multiple hats. He called Leonor over, and introduced her as the head of the literacy and adult education commission in the party cell. He suggested that I collaborate with her – AND TRAIN HER! It makes me think of a recurrent theme in conversations over situations that came up during the years I worked in the Ministry – life as theater. There seem to be people in countless structures throughout this country who have titles and responsibilities – and don't have any idea whatsoever of what they're supposed to be doing. Not surprising in a country where, at 21, you may be director of a school of 3000 pupils or a major industrial complex. But this acute lack of training and experience is placed in the context of preposterous formalities of office that make it hard to admit your uncertainties. Often times your immediate superior gives little access, perhaps hiding his own uncertainty about how to proceed. Meanwhile there is a whole mystique about standards, doing things "properly" and "correctly" that distances you from your own common sense and makes you fear to draw on your own experiences. The roles are distributed, the sets and costumes in place, but nobody knows the script and there doesn't seem to be any director.

(Field Notes, February 24, 1986)

I did follow up on Fenias' suggestion to meet with Leonor. The meetings included a long discussion, most of it about life in the areas in which the armed

bandits wander at will at night. In fact, nobody talks about anything else. The discussion was a bit unstructured – with me talking a lot and Leonor talking very little when we got to literacy. The fact that she has little to say about literacy would seem to indicate that she has little concrete notion of what she is doing as head of the party commission on adult education. She seemed like quite a capable person and has a big responsibility in running the day care center. There were certainly no signs of particular insights about literacy, however.

The inactivity of her committee was later confirmed by a conversation with Atalia. Atalia was a special friend whom I'd gotten to know when, for a brief period, the training section had desks in the Human Resources section where she worked. She made tea, did some clerical work and knew how to operate the switch board. She had also managed to pass third year when almost everybody else failed. She had a feisty nature and ready commentary on everybody and everything. Her remarks set me thinking about the party and Leonor's role in it.

*Atalia:* Who have you been talking to today?

*Judith:* Leonor.

*Atalia:* Because she's the party person responsible for the school?

*Judith:* Yes.

*Atalia:* So what did she have to say?

*Judith:* She didn't say much because she has been away.

*Atalia:* She can't have much to say because she's never even visited the school.

(Field Notes February 26, 1986)

Several subsequent meetings were set up with Leonor but always cancelled for reasons of a higher order, like party meetings outside of the factory. It became clear that little support was likely to be forthcoming for literacy activities from this source.

Once again, Leonor has postponed a meeting – but done so in a way that makes it seem beyond her control. Her response to the documents has been zero, since several meetings to discuss them have been postponed. One concrete suggestion on my part was that some of the things raised should be discussed with the students themselves, and that she as party person responsible, could organize an opportunity for a kind of class assembly in which the students would get their say. From my side, this was a way of getting some direct and collective participation from the students in looking at what was happening in literacy. Given their reading levels, handing the document directly to them was impossible. I could

have proposed that I coordinate a discussion with them, but that seemed to set it up in a less than appropriate way. In retrospect, maybe I should have. Leonor's suggestion today was that, instead of her doing it as party, Aurelio should do it as director of the school. So political structures simply don't enter the picture as having power to do something like this. In the end, it all goes through the administrative structure. Or perhaps this came as a result of my mistake, of suggesting that, if the class assemblies were held during the final week of my field work, I would like to bring along refreshments for a good-bye to the students. Leonor immediately latched on to the idea of organizing a good-bye party and left the notion of the class assembly to Aurelio. It probably reflects an instinctive sense of her own competence in organizing a party and her hesitations about organizing a discussion on literacy.

(Field Notes, April 4, 1986)

## 6. Gifts

The CIM "village" was full of exchanges of favours and gifts, some to display power, some within patron-client relationships, some as expressions of affection, within the context of friendship and/or courtship. I found myself drawn into this world, with my own agenda of building up rapid rapport with informants as a reason for gift giving. Within a short period of time, I noted a tendency to do favours and give gifts as a genuine expression of affection for my colleagues, with whom I consolidated the support role already established during my earlier visits while on DNEA staff. My awareness of the importance of being a giver of gifts began after a visit to Warehouse 6 at tea-time and the discovery of beer cans ingeniously crafted with a handle to serve as cups. To my query to Macavela, the gentle, weary, older shop floor boss who had made them as to whether more cans were needed came an affirmative reply. Next day I brought a sack of empty beer cans. A genuine response of enthusiasm on my part to a local initiative to solve a problem? A calculation of a researcher that she might need a favour from this man? I'm not sure which prevailed. Anyway, a friendship was definitely established, and he was helpful in giving me access to that section of the factory.

There were numerous gifts to the school itself – calendars, boxes of pens, seen by me as both a means of solving problems and a way of making literacy interesting. For the school opening, I was able to arrange for prizes from the national office in the form of T-shirts and shoes, both of which were highly coveted. I learned much later that Cristina, the tall, slow-moving woman from the sacks warehouse who had received prizes of shoes and a T-shirt, actually ended up with two colleagues not speaking to her for three months because

they were so jealous of her prizes. They claimed to have had marks as high when they did literacy previously but no prizes!

Amelia of Warehouse 6 passed by yesterday and I suggested to her that some coaching for Cristina, her work mate in Warehouse 6 could be helpful. She put on a prickly air and repeated twice that Cristina would have to be the one to make the approach. I suggested that she could raise the question, asking how Cristina's studies were going and offering help – but she strongly negated my suggestion. After class today I asked Cristina about the possibility of help from Amelia. Cristina says no, because Amelia is full of jealousy because Cristina got prizes for her second year marks. Amelia says when she studied, she got good marks and nobody gave her anything. Cristina says not only has Amelia reacted badly but also another man in her sector spoke to her yesterday for the first time since mid-February. My God! But I think there really is an incredibly watchful eye over everything that changes hands and an inordinate amount of petty bickering. One can be sure that what leaves CIM in the hands of the senior management and department heads is noted by everyone<sup>6</sup>.

(Field Notes April 3, 1986)

The gifts often triggered insights into the social relations of the factory. A chance conversation in the car-pool about rotting bananas in the CIM stores led to discussions of Canadian banana cakes, and Judith sent home with a sack of over-ripe bananas, flour and eggs to show how to make banana cake. I did so – and took a cake back which was enthusiastically eaten in the staff dining room. Unfortunately, there was not enough cake for my colleagues in the Social Service Department so another had to be promised for that department. Once again, the cake was duly furnished – and given to Angelica, a young Mozambican woman who had been one of the most dynamic people in the old Dynamizing Group structure. She had been encouraged to take on more responsibility by the former head and was now being marginalized by the new one into doing purely routine administrative work. She took the distribution task with great seriousness, and to my surprise, I then found myself on her distribution network. She offered me eggs to take home a few days later. Source? I didn't have the courage to ask. I suspect they were not from CIM supplies but from some worker with chickens who brought eggs to sell to colleagues, but hard to say.

Everybody arrived at work with sacks. Bread was bought and sold legally. One had the impression that much more changed hands, lots of it in semi-legal categories. Often at noon hour, someone would be busy selling this or that,

ranging from ladies underwear to plastic baskets brought in from neighbouring Swaziland.

I lost an inexpensive but treasured ear-ring one day in the CIM grounds and was amazed to see it a few days later in a young worker's ear. I did not know him, but went over to the group he was standing with and told him that it was mine. They all looked a bit thunder struck, and I realized it was the classic situation. My power was perceived as that of the "white madam" who could cause him big trouble by claiming he'd stolen her ear-ring. I hastened to clarify that I knew it had been found somewhere in the factory – and asked him if he would accept another one in return, since I liked it so much. He agreed readily and they all looked immensely relieved. Somewhat, to the astonishment of Massingarella, the Mill technician to whom I was giving a ride a few days later, I stopped the car when I spotted the young worker, fished out a tiny gold ear-ring and gave it to him. I never saw him again, but had a sense that this and other incidents spread through the factory communications network like wildfire, and played some role in the trust and affection that the workers constantly exhibited.

For my immediate colleagues, there were concrete gifts and favours – a second hand watch for Lopes whose own had broken, powder and rubber pants from the dollar shop for Aurelio's first baby at a time when absolutely nothing was available, a ride all the way to Zita's house off in an obscure corner of a distant suburb with sacks full of a double supply of rations too heavy to carry after his vacation.

Books and articles were also "given". The car pool and talk with the others in the training department generated many conversations, out of which came offers to lend books or articles from me. When the students were involved in letter writing, I bought UNICEF cards readily available in Maputo book shops for re-sale to workers to write their letters. Some were sold at the classes and the rest left with teacher Lopes to sell. I was amused to see that colleagues in the Social Services Department all bought them. My own jesting refusal to sell to them, saying they were for the workers in literacy could be maintained; for Lopes, a very junior staff member, the peer pressure was too much.

CIM also gave a lot of favours and "gifts" to me. CIM gave me access to the sales of produce in the factory, so that I too left the factory with my sack of bread, and from time to time other things such as bananas, pineapple, cloth, pork, chocolate bars etc. They agreed to my request for transport and included me in the staff car pool. At a point when I was having difficulty getting gas for the DNEA van because the pump where it got its monthly gas allocation was out of order, CIM sold gas to me. At one point, they serviced

the car. In return for this, I took an auto parts shopping list with me to Swaziland.

I had the impression that the most important "gift" given on my part, however, was recognition and respect. At CIM there is a factory hierarchy and discipline characterized by interconnected relations of subordination, felt particularly strongly by the least skilled workers who wore in the literacy classes. My position within those hierarchies of domination and subordination was an anomaly. By being cast as the "researcher", the "observer", the "outsider", I could make contact at multiple levels without either my own or my contact's legitimacy being in question. I could ride in the director's car, yet on the days I brought the DNEA van, give rides to the women cleaners. This strong connection with the literacy students, knowing them by name, showing interest in workers' lives and problems, was clearly a different posture, cutting through the normal hierarchies of power. As such, it got in response many gestures of trust and friendship from the workers.



## CHAPTER 6

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# *Time for schooling at CIM*

I'd like to do fifth class. My problem is the time. I get home too late to do the cleaning and feed the children. A woman is always being squeezed. She's always in the middle. Always given orders.

Amelia Cossa, Warehouse 6, 43 years  
Passed fourth class in 1984  
Has never enrolled in fifth class

When I returned in 1985, the CIM school had been moved from the old Biscuit Factory into a long one-storey block of small rooms, tucked away along the far wall of the factory complex. The first office serves as a general meeting room, followed by the offices of the Frelimo Party, the workers' organization, (OTM), the militia, the women's organization, (OMM) and the youth organization, (OJM). At the other end are offices for the grounds division. The rooms in the middle are taken up by the school, with teachers' rooms for both secondary and primary levels and two classrooms. The modesty of this newer cement block construction with metal sheet roofs stands out against the impressive scale of most of the factory complex – presumably a post-independence effort to make space for workers and their organizations.

All of the education programmes for workers were carried out in the "school". The decision to designate the space where the literacy programmes were done as the "school" came from CIM itself. It reflects the tendencies everywhere for literacy to approximate the formal school system. In the days of the early literacy campaigns, the documents from the DNEA referred to "literacy centers". Over the years, the organizational forms of literacy activities more and more approximated schooling. From 1980 on, there was a common school year, which meant a common launching of the academic year

by education and administration officials throughout the country in which even passing mention of literacy was less and less frequent. There was a common exam period in November followed by a long vacation. In 1983, at the time of the introduction of the National Education System, the DNEA did not indicate organizational forms for literacy distinct from schooling. What's more, much was made of the NES having interlocking sub-systems that allowed easy transfer from one stream to another, with equivalencies firmly in place. In response to this message, workplaces assumed even more the model of the formal system.

At CIM, the "school" offered literacy programmes during the day and general education programmes in the early evening. The CIM "school" was linked formally to the Matola Secondary School, one of a number of workplace satellite schools. The fifth, sixth and seventh class programmes available at CIM were identical to those offered in other city night schools, and these programmes differed only marginally from the day programme for young people in the General Education Sub-system.

The second and third year programmes of the Adult Education Sub-system were taken as the beginners level on the educational ladder within this multi-stream system. They shared the same formalities and the same organizational forms of graded contents, timetables, knowledge divided into subject areas, set text books, daily lessons, attendance requirements and exams.

The organizational forms of secondary schooling spilled over into literacy. The literacy teachers adopted the white smocks favoured by teachers in the secondary schools. Whatever practical value they had against chalk dust were far superseded by their symbolic value. For both students and teachers, they signalled formal classrooms with authoritative teachers' voices lecturing, filling empty heads with wisdom, all of which would be needed to be returned verbatim for the exam.

The institutional arrangement of time and space for a "school" within a factory setting is a curious one, with the school's institutional forms superimposed on the factory discipline already established<sup>1</sup>. In CIM, as in other work-place settings, the literacy programme sponsored by the state took uneasy account of prior arrangements of time in terms of either production rhythms per se or the social routines around meals, rest and transport.

The CIM "school", like all schools in all societies, has a set of organizational forms, practices, agents and documents, an institutional arrangement of time and space. As Michel Foucault makes clear in his studies of power, an institution like the CIM "school" can be seen as a kind of "block" in which there are regulated and concerted systems for adjustment of abilities, resour-

ces of communication and power relations. Foucault himself points to the relations of schooling and power.

Take, for example, an educational institution: the disposal of its space, the meticulous regulations which govern its internal life, the different activities which are organized there, the diverse persons who live there or meet one another, each with his own functions, his well-defined character – all these things constitute a block of capacity-communications-power. The activity which ensures apprenticeship and the acquisition of aptitudes or types of behaviour is developed there by means of a whole ensemble of regulated communications (lessons, questions and answers, orders, exhortations, coded signs of obedience, differentiation marks of the "value" of each person and of the levels of knowledge) and by the means of a whole series of power processes (enclosure, surveillance, reward and punishment, the pyramidal hierarchy).

(Foucault 1982:787)

I have chosen to study "schooling" at CIM, then, looking at the institutional organization of time and space<sup>2</sup>. While the division is somewhat arbitrary when, in fact, the two are so integrally related, it is useful for analytical purposes to separate them. In this chapter I shall explore the institutional and organizational arrangements of time while in Chapter 7, I will look at the institutional organization of space.

As indicated previously, by 1985/86 when I did my data collection, the organization of time at the CIM "school", as in other workplace literacy settings, was determined by a school year controlled nationally and run concurrently with the state school system. Although both dwindling participation in literacy and regular reports from field visits pointed to the fact that a set calendar of this sort in no way responded to the realities of organizing literacy in the workplace, the fiction persisted that it was possible to run national literacy programmes with a set calendar as you did the general school system.

School time at CIM was also organized around daily lessons in a standardized curriculum for adults. This programme of studies was introduced in 1983, as we have seen above, and was part of the Adult Education Sub-system of the National Education System. The first stage of the graded programme for adults consisted of three years of literacy and post/literacy which were meant to be the equivalent of basic primary education. In the new General Education Sub-system, the basic primary education curriculum for children extended over five years, instead of four as in the old system. After completing third year under the NES or Adult Education under the old system, adults

passed into lower secondary (fifth and sixth class) and upper secondary (seventh to ninth class).

The school year began on February 16 and continued until mid-November, when a nationally organized evaluation process was held with standardized exams. For the workplace-based literacy centers, the first date tended to be only minimally operative. Few were the centers, even the well-organized ones like CIM, that really could begin classes effectively in mid-February. Aside from the organizational problems of having books and teachers in place, many work-places found that a mid-February starting date conflicted with collective vacations or harvest time or a peak production period. These factors were totally outside the control of the Ministry of Education in a country with widely different climatic conditions over its 2000 miles from north to south, and widely diverse industries. Still, the notion that the adult education programmes could operate just as any other sub-system within the National Education System persisted<sup>3</sup>.

When I arrived to begin work in May, 1985, I was informed that the starting date for classes that year had been much delayed. The new books for the third year programme had arrived only at the end of March; the programme began only in early April, a full six weeks late. The second volumes of the books did not arrive at all.

In 1986, CIM was able to begin classes only one week after the prescribed starting date, with books and basic supplies more or less in hand. This was unusual, and in part the result of my inputs. The CIM school director had put in the requisition for books and teaching materials well before the opening of the school year. Nonetheless, a saga of futile trips and much frustration was endured before the material actually arrived. I observed this process of trying to get textbooks from the city education office and also used my access to the new National Director to keep her informed of the difficulties that centers like CIM were encountering. This may well have resulted in faster results. I also donated some of the school supplies the city education office was unable to furnish.

The saga is outlined below, as an indication of how creating time to do literacy within the framework of the formal education system was an enormous struggle. It had relatively modest dimensions in CIM with its high level of organization, availability of transport and presence of an agitator. In many literacy centers, this same sequence of events would have delayed the books and supplies for several months rather than several weeks.

Yet another trip out to the factory – everybody a bit bad-tempered because the car arrived late. Talking with Aurelio, [the director of the school], this

morning made me even more irritable than I already was. He has a style that makes me boil – a pose of efficiency that is pure theatre. How can he only now come to the conclusion that we are going to need a new teacher, after three straight weeks of talking about 3 classes? Still worse is the question of school supplies. The person at the school supply depot of the City Directorate of Education and Culture said yesterday, "They'll be available only from February 17th on. We're still receiving the materials. They'll be distributed first to the primary schools." How long will this go on in Mozambique – Frelimo Party and Ministry talking of education for workers as top priority and then, in practice, giving all priority to the general system. What's worse is the way it's so passively accepted. (Maybe it will continue until the passive acceptance of it stops!)

(Field Notes February 2, 1986)

#### First Day of Classes

Aurelio went to the opening of a professional training course. Zita [head of the training department] forgot to pass by the school. Carlos, the teacher from last year who is off to work in the Mahotas, came. The new teacher did not appear. About 15 workers turned up at 11 o'clock. They were left waiting outside. Finally they came into the classroom at 11.25 just to have their classes indicated to them. They were informed that the timetable was identical with that of 1985 – despite hot debate all week within the Social Services Department about how to timetable the third year programme, which is based on 12 rather than 10 hours per week. The books still aren't here. Zita requisitioned a cheque today so that they can be picked up tomorrow. He has not been informed about the problems with the third year timetable.

(Field Notes February 17, 1986)

#### Second Day of Classes

A message from the National Directorate of Education in response to my memo to the Director alerting her to what was happening in the city office as literacy centers tried to get their supplies. The memo says that the way to get school materials is to make a requisition and join to it a credential from the city education officer in charge of the zone. I passed it on to Aurelio and Zita. They were surprised. We've never done it like that before. We always made a requisition, along with a list of the workers who are registered in the classes. Has my intervention created a situation in which a response has become necessary and the city office is inventing new steps. I am full of curiosity – whether it will really be necessary to present a credential from Mr. Mondlane, the person in charge of the zone. Aurelio's comment sums it up. "Do we really have to go looking for this man who is never in his office and never comes here to visit, just for him to write us a credential? After all, what does he know about CIM? If he

wants to know how many workers CIM has ready to study, who does he ask? Us."

(Field Notes February 18, 1986)

People went to the city office. They did get some sort of credential and proceeded to the stores office. There they were told that the stores office is open in the morning only to receive goods, and that they had to come back in the afternoon for distribution.

(Field Notes February 20, 1986)

They got transport arranged again and went to the stores office with the credential, only to find themselves in the midst of a line-up - including people from the primary schools, still hoping to get their materials. The CIM people managed to get textbooks, pencils and erasers. Exercise books and pens are still missing.

(Field Notes February 21, 1986)

Today the CIM car-pool failed - so I got a ride out to Matola with my neighbour, Balate. He insisted on taking me for a quick tour of the BIC pen factory he manages. It is classic import substitution. Everything comes from abroad, - the pellets of plastic, all the components and a series of machines which ingeniously assemble BIC pens. How much does Mozambique have to pay for the name? Balate insisted I take samples with me and sent me off with two big boxes of pens, one blue and one red, a treasure in a city of a million where the only place to buy a pen is on the black market.

(Field Notes February 25, 1986)

The gift from Balate has come in handy. I gave it to the school, since the city education office has still not come through with pens, and the secondary school students really need them. Ironically, the red pens created most excitement - apparently they make it possible for the teachers to mark the students' work in the "correct" way!

(Field Notes February 26, 1986)

The opening of the school year, then, approximates February 16, but often between the formal opening on that date and effective commencement of classes with books, pencils, pens and teachers in place, there is a time lag. No such flexibility characterizes the end of the school year. With or without books, without or without sufficient time to complete the programme of studies, the final exam is administered nationally on a fixed date in the middle of November.

Clearly these delays in starting the school year have major ramifications for what proportion of the programme of studies is actually covered prior to

the final exam. In 1984, the CIM school did not complete the programme of studies. The teachers could not remember what point they had reached but recalled that they had not covered everything before the final exams.

In 1985, most of the second year programme was covered but only a very small portion of the third year programme was covered because of problems in textbook distribution. The lesson material covered was as follows:

Second Year	Portuguese: 86/90 lessons
	Mathematics: 44/51 lessons
Third Year	Portuguese: Vol.1 – 60/60 lessons Vol.2 - 0/67 lessons
	Mathematics: Vol.1 - 43/49 lessons; Vol.2 - 0/35 lessons
	Natural Science: 24/36 lessons

The second book for the new language and mathematics programmes for third year did not arrive at all and in mathematics, not even all of the first book was covered. The final exam prepared by the Ministry was meant to take account of the fact that many centers had not received all of the books, and that some had gone back to using the old curriculum materials for lack of textbooks. Nonetheless, the failure rate was extremely high and some students at CIM indicated that there had been material on the mathematics exam that they had not covered in classes.

In general, the problem of organizing literacy programmes with sufficient time to complete the programme of studies was an enormous one, not just at CIM but in all the work place literacy centers. The factors working against completion of the curriculum included not only delays in the arrivals of materials but also classes interrupted regularly because of everything from pay day and queues to buy soap or oil to collective vacations, shift work or harvesting campaigns. There was no control mechanism for monitoring how much of the programme was covered, but even in a center as well organized as CIM, there were huge difficulties.

Delays in arrival of the books and interruption in classes were not the only factors that sent the student to the exams ill-prepared. I discovered that during the first year of the new third year programme in 1985, there had been a complete failure to understand how to do the timetabling. For first and second year, each week includes five two-hour lessons, three of Portuguese and two of mathematics. The third year programme, however, introduces twelve rather than ten hours per week, divided into eight lessons of ninety minutes, four of Portuguese, three of math and one of natural sciences. The third year manual suggests two 90 minute lessons a day for four days a week to make up the twelve hours. The CIM "school" had kept to the same schedule as the second year programme, i.e. one two hour lesson each day. This meant that each



lesson was two hours rather than 90 minutes, and each week consisted of five lessons instead of the eight programmed in the manual.

The results at the end of 1985 were, of course, disappointing. The students had covered very little of the programme by the time the final exams were given. Only seven of the twenty-seven who did the exam passed. The average grade was only 33 percent. For the workers, this meant an experience of failure they certainly did not need. Only one of the students I spoke to had any recognition of the organizational problems in covering the curriculum as a factor.

This year there was a problem with the exam. We arrived at the exam and found things which we had never seen before. The Natural Science book was a problem. This problem could have been the teacher's fault or our fault. A lot of us got into the habit of skipping natural science classes because we didn't understand a thing.

Luis Guache, waiter, Mess,  
Frelimo Party candidate, 47 years

Most, however, gave explanations of their failure turning on their own inadequacy rather than on the organizational problems of no books and an only partially completed programme of studies. The feelings of Bernardo Gimo, a particularly dedicated machine operator in the Pasta Factory captured the experience for many. Gimo was 46 years old and had worked at the factory for 25 years.

When I asked him what he did, he said, "I'm a driver - of a machine!" He went on to say that he had "learned as an apprentice but begun work as the 'chauffeur' in 1976". For reasons most probably related to shift work, Gimo did not do literacy until 1982, when he successfully passed first year. He then did second year of the new programme, failed it first time round but succeeded in passing the exam in 1984 with 85 percent in mathematics and 60 percent in Portuguese. He failed third year with very low marks.

I just go to school because I'm here in the factory. Next year, I'm not going. I can't continue any more. It's not that I don't want to. I do. But I don't have any aptitude for studying. I began to study in colonial times but it didn't go anywhere. I don't want to abandon my work mates to go to school when attending school gives no results.

(Interview with Bernardo Gimo, January 7, 1986)

In Gimo's account, there is neither recognition of his accomplishment in passing the first two years nor acknowledgment that he did third year during a year when there were no textbooks and only a tiny proportion of the

programme was covered. When we talked about his studying giving no results during the interview, I asked him if his boss in the Pasta Factory could demand that he fill production quotas during a period of no raw materials. I think he understood the parallel – but there was no let up in his attitude about his own inadequacies as a student, an attitude established during colonialism and still strongly present. For workers, then, the experience of literacy was often yet another experience of failure.

### *Permission to go to class - A daily negotiation*

The problem is – it's not worth it to go to classes because there comes a time when the job puts the squeeze on you.

Bernardo Taimo, Workshops, 44 years  
1982 Passed first year with 100%  
1983 Passed second year with 93  
1984/1985 Did not attend

I had already anticipated organizational problems in finding a viable time for literacy within the factory setting, having seen this problem emerge elsewhere throughout the country. At CIM, the collision course between shift work and classes was the highly visible example of this problem. Indeed, I discovered that the only pocket of illiteracy still intact was within the Mill where shift work prevailed.

What came as a surprise to me at CIM was the discovery of the ongoing process of negotiating time for schooling that each worker-student had to face daily. There was little visibility to this strong tension between the regulation of timing by factory and school officials. It was a constant feature, however, of the experience of literacy for the worker. It involved the development of survival techniques for the worker-students, negotiating contradictory demands to be present both in the classroom and on the shop floor. These demands came from fellow-workers, shop floor bosses, teachers, factory administrators and representatives of the workers' and women's organizations. The tension came from the need to seek permission daily to go to class as part of each day's labour process. Thus participation in literacy required a daily reproduction of the relations of power and subordination between the shop floor boss and the individual worker specifically over the question of time for literacy classes.

The organization of lesson time in relation to production time was, then, a matter of constant, though not often articulated tension. The lessons for second year took place from 11-1 each day, all within work hours. I was told

that in the past, literacy was organized outside of work hours, but there was little participation and therefore the system of literacy classes within work time was adopted. It is not clear whether this period of literacy outside of work time was related only to shift workers or also applied to those doing the 7 to 5 shift.

For each section of the factory, the organization of school time in relation to production time posed different problems. The Pasta Factory tended to organize production around a kind of piece work system, where each work team has a production target to complete before going home. In many cases, the team, made up mainly of women, could finish before eleven, when literacy began, or certainly before one, when it ended. The women preferred to go home early and try to resolve some of the problems of survival in their households, rather than stay around for literacy. If some left for literacy at eleven, others were delayed in finishing early, so there was a fair bit of group pressure not to leave. In addition, there were frequent breakdowns of the production line during the time I worked in the factory. The workers were given cleaning tasks and the like during these slack times which, again, could be done before eleven and resulted in a tendency to go home early rather than come to literacy classes.

The Finished Products Warehouse organized production around teams of six to eight men, loading 50 kilo sacks of flour and maize meal into clients' trucks. Each loading operation involved a different mixture of conveyer belt and individual handling by the team members, depending on the location of the produce in the warehouse and the size of the truck. Here, participation in literacy meant breaking up the teams of handlers, creating both more onerous and also more dangerous working conditions for those in the now depleted teams. There were substantial periods when workers from the warehouse missed classes, because of the volume of work in the section. Clients became irate when they had done the paper work and still had long delays in actually loading up the produce.

It's difficult, for those who handle sacks of grain here and then go to classes. You're very tired by the end of the day, and want to go home and rest. It's a hard sector. When I started, there were 16 upstairs and 16 below. Now we're very few. It's too much. When someone is sick, it's worse. And when people go off to classes, those who stay behind suffer. We can't do it. For those who stay behind, it's punishment.

Afonso Chipente, handler, 25 years  
1984 Passed fourth class  
1985 Dropped out of fifth year

Others in the Finished Products Warehouse gave the same account of how impossible it was to find time for literacy. I want to go to classes but my work doesn't permit it, explained Antonio Muiambo, a handler who was 49 years old. He had passed first year after three tries. When I met him in 1985, he was in second year and failed again.

Muiambo had not studied as a child in the rural district of Manjacaze where he was born, nor during his years of work in South Africa. When he first started at CIM in 1977, he had not attended the school. With the reorganization of the schooling programme in 1982, however, Muiambo also began to study. There are no records of how many days he lost during the three years before he passed the first year exam. In 1985, however, he had missed no less than 86 days, or roughly four out of the nine months of classes. (Interview with Antonio Muiambo, January 14, 1986) For Muiambo, the experience of literacy was that, on the one hand, the CIM management put his name on the enrollment list, but on the other hand, they reorganized his work sector, paring down the number in such a way that two hour absences each day for literacy created an impossible situation for those left behind. Muiambo therefore missed a great number of classes – and failed year after year.

Many workers in this section pointed to the same problem. Francisco Xiconela passed first year and then dropped out of classes. He attributed this to his work situation. "Yes, I missed a lot of classes. Our section is very small and we have a lot to do; we're only six people now." (Interview, February 10, 1986) For Alfredo Joel, the problem was that his absence for classes left his specific task uncovered for two hours each day. "My job is to pick out the torn sacks and substitute them. It's hard for me to leave the team to go to classes." (Interview, January 20, 1986)

Work in the Silos, where grain was off-loaded from railway cars, was also characterized by a constantly varying rhythm of production. This created enormous hardships for those trying to study. All of the shipments of wheat and maize coming into the milling complex came from food aid, with little control over arrival dates. When it came in box cars from the port, there was maximum pressure to off load it quickly, because each day that the boxcar stayed at CIM meant additional payment. Many times the rolling stock was South African, and this meant payment in foreign exchange. Thus the normal routine was to add on extra shifts when there were cars to be unloaded and cancel out literacy attendance during these periods.

If I can manage to study here until the end, I can pass. This business of being absent for several days or weeks at a time is no good. When you return, you've forgotten what you learned before.

Major Franguana 48 years Warehouse 2  
1983 Passed first year  
1985 Failed second year

There are organizational problems. During a whole year, I only managed to attend two months of classes. It's not because I don't have a good head. If I could stay there for just six months, I'd have something firmly in my head. It's because I never have time to study. Three months only – that's nothing.

Mario Joaquim, handler, 36 years  
Passed first year in 1984  
Registered for second year in 1985  
Didn't do exam.

The Sacks Warehouse was located in the farthest corner of the factory complex. The workers there, all women except for the heads(!), had responsibility for sorting, cleaning and repairing sacks. It seemed to have a very lazy rhythm without any of the pressures felt in the heat and noise of the pasta lines, or the fury of conveyer belts and sweating bodies handling heavy sacks in the Silos and Finished Products Warehouse. Even here, however, time demands for production and schooling were in tension.

A person can't go to the field for a day and then stay home for three months. You have to go and weed every day. In that way the crops will grow. In our sector we have a lot of work. When the maize mill or the wheat mill and the pasta factory need sacks, we have to guarantee them. If not, the work can't go ahead. On those days the women in the Sacks Warehouse are left without classes. But those from the sectors that attend get something. What can we do when we return? We are left behind. It's not a question of our bosses refusing to let us go. We ourselves see what there is to do in the sector and stay to do it with our fellow workers.

Monica Gabriel, Warehouse 2, 48 years  
Passed first year in 1982  
Passed second year in 1984

What became clear over time was that the permission to do literacy was negotiated daily between shop floor bosses and workers, and amongst the workers themselves. While the factory was obligated by law to make basic education available to its work force, and from 1981 onwards, had to include literacy targets in its annual planning figures, this did not mean that literacy

was lived by workers as their right. When fellow workers were sick or on vacation, when production was lagging behind, when there were jobs to be done that took the workers away from the factory, when there was a need to off-load railway cars of grain, or even more routine procedures such as filling orders, supplying sacks or drums of oil from one section of the factory to another, the first thing to be dropped was literacy.

Tension around time for literacy affected groups of workers in different ways, then, according to the section of the factory in which they were located. This was not the only factor, however, that differentiated the experience. For the workers in third year, the additional hours of classes kept them from arriving at the cafeteria on time. It was only during a class assembly two months into the term that the workers put forward this problem, and the need to alert the mess to the fact that a group of workers would be arriving late each day and needed to have their food set aside for them.

The workers in the assembly raised a problem about the mess hall. When they arrive there after class, the food is finished. The mess staff makes something for them to eat but they then arrive back at their sectors only at 14:20 or 14:45 and catch it from their section heads. It's only now at this meeting, two months into the school year, that we hear of these problems with the mess hall.

(Field Notes, April 10, 1986)

The time-tabling of classes for lower and upper secondary schooling was equally fraught with difficulties, even though secondary schooling was outside of work hours. Fifth class had been introduced in 1984, with one more class added on each year so that by 1986, workers could do up to seventh class in the CIM school. Up until 1986, classes were held entirely outside of work hours, beginning at 5:30 and continuing until 9:30 at night, four nights a week. The CIM workers doing night school were given a bread and tea ration before entering classes and transport home after they had finished. This put them in a decidedly advantageous position compared to other adults doing night school throughout the city who had to fend for themselves in finding transport to their schools, finding a way to eat, and ultimately finding a way home late at night. For many, the only way was to walk home, arriving often after midnight.

For women, time for literacy posed special problems. For women workers who were nursing, a not unimportant category since most of the women interviewed showed a pattern of giving birth every two years, the timing of the literacy class conflicted with the time prescribed to go to the day care center to feed their children, adding yet one more complication since usually

health problems during pregnancy and maternity leave had already created major interruptions.

For the few women at CIM who had successfully completed primary school, the time-tabling for fifth to seventh class virtually ruled out participation. Almost all of them had responsibilities for child care, water carrying, and evening meal preparation which necessitated leaving the factory at five. It was not even discussable to think of signing up for classes, and arriving home each evening only at ten o'clock.

Leonor Benjamim had had the chance to study as a child but went back to school at CIM in 1983 to get her certificate. She felt she could need it at any moment, since a day could come when she would be looking for work. Her logic was derived from the new CIM admissions policy whereby a worker had to have at least a primary school certificate in order to apply.

Leonor had worked for 20 years at CIM, starting in the Biscuit Factory in 1965 at the age of 17. She was currently a clerical assistant in the Workshop, and a member of the Frelimo Party, the OMM (Organization of Mozambican Women) and the OTM (Mozambican Worker's Organization)

I really want to study but social conditions don't make this possible. Senora Judith knows how it is with men. I'm alone there at the house. I don't have any household help. If I study here, I'll get home only at 9 or 10 at night. My husband is without food or water. He could decide to get another woman, saying "This woman is prepared to cook for me. You don't want to."

These are the social problems we face. I want to study a lot. I'd like to do up to at least sixth grade – but I can't because of the social situation. Employing somebody costs a lot. They demand a lot of money – more than our salaries. My husband lets me work. Many husbands wouldn't do this. He accepts that we don't have children. Because of this, I can't stop being a good woman for him.

Leonor Benjamim, 37 years,  
Workshops clerical staff.

Amelia Cossa had also worked at CIM for many years, starting off weighing and packaging in the Pasta Factory in 1958 as a fifteen year old straight from Class 3 in a Maputo primary school. She had had jobs in various parts of the factory over the years and was now in the Sacks Warehouse. She had also gone back to get her certificate, and passed on the second try.

Night school posed insurmountable timing problems for her. She described her day as beginning at four in the morning when she got up for two hours of work on her machamba or family plot, even on Saturdays and



Sundays. Between six and seven, she prepared for work. From seven when the bus came until five-thirty when it deposited her at home, she was at CIM.

I'd like to do fifth class. My problem is the time. I get home too late to do the cleaning and feed the children. A woman is always being squeezed. She's always in the middle. Always given orders. When she gets home, she has to do this but can't do that or the other. She's the one who always gets ordered about.

Amelia Cossa 43 years Warehouse 6  
Passed fourth class in 1984  
Has never enrolled in fifth

There had been a moment at the time of independence when fighting to make time for schooling was worth it. A primary school certificate meant something then, and for many could lead to promotions. In a survey done in 1981/82 as the new management team began to tackle literacy as part of its strategy to build up a qualified work force, a questionnaire was filled out by 48 CIM workers. One question read: "Is it worthwhile to know how to read, write and count? Why?" The responses to the question were as follows:

To have a better job	12
To be a section head	12
To make the work easier	2
To solve problems easily	2
To discover new things	9
To increase knowledge	7
To know where you're going	1
To have a better life	2
To not be left behind	1
To be worth more	2
To help your family	4

(Source: CIM Archives)

By 1985, attainment of sixth or ninth class standing began to have less meaning for many workers. A new calculation of whether it was worth it to invest time in literacy had begun to emerge. There were no promotions or pay increases for increased education done "on the job". It was a difficulty recognized by management.

The problem is that we cannot recognize success in literacy with greater responsibility or higher salaries. In the period after independence, many workers were promoted – they filled positions of management even as

illiterates because they knew the work. Now young people enter. We cannot take out the old workers because the young ones still have a lot to learn. They can have sixth class – or even seventh or eighth – but they are still far from being able to control the situation. Meanwhile the old-timers have already proved their worth. Studying to guarantee or maintain your place makes sense – but to be promoted, you would have to study a lot. Just fourth class would not be enough to guarantee anything – not even fifth or sixth.

(Conversation with Cardoso Muendane, Industrial Director, January 15, 1986)

Discussions with other management staff confirmed the efforts that had been put into developing a stable labour force with at least minimum qualifications. Both the administrative and political structures had encouraged literacy, according to Angelica Aguilera, the former Director of Social Services. She recounted how Industrial Director Cardoso Muendane himself, someone who had been at CIM for many years, had done a whole series of meetings and interviews with workers to try to determine why people were not attending classes. "Behind the first responses of how much people want to study came, slowly, a second set of responses that began to show literacy as just a waste of time because it brings no concrete results." (Conversation with Angelica Aguilera, June 6, 1985)

The head of the Maintenance Department, Frechaut, was another person who had been active in organizing literacy with the Dynamizing Group in the early days. For him, there was no mystery as to why workers choose not to make a big effort to do literacy.

Today at lunch was the first time Frechaut and I talked about literacy. I had already heard that he was a dynamic figure in literacy activities done in the era of the Dynamizing Group. He certainly sees the motivation question as one of workers calculating how to improve their lives.

Take, for example, the illiterate in the loading section. It's heavy work. It takes some muscles. An illiterate worker looks around and sees fellow-workers with fourth class or sixth class. What's the incentive to study? After all the years to reach sixth class, you do the same hard work and get the same low pay.

Look at the Secretary of the OTM (Organization of Mozambican Workers). He had fourth class. Then he got a driver's license. Then he did sixth class. Each step of the way brought different work but it also brought more pay. He was motivated to study.

(Field Notes, June 20, 1985)

Although the expectation that schooling could result in upward mobility dwindled, there seemed to be a clear recognition that literacy was necessary

for employment security. Zita, the head of the training department, made a statement of the obvious one day that was so shocking it threw me off balance. He offered as a common sense working knowledge the observation that people do literacy at CIM because there could come a day when the illiterate workers find themselves on the street. Even without this being stated, the workers take the current policy of requiring a minimum of fourth class for all new employees as the shape of the future. Literacy is seen as a means of guaranteeing job security. And more than one person posed it point blank in the interviews. "Senora Judith, do you think an illiterate person could be employed at CIM nowadays?"

Even with sixth class, then, the likelihood of someone with ninth class appearing and earning more, even without knowing a thing about the running of the factory, was high. The workers were clearly concerned about this reality. Even Laurinda Zibia, the cleaner in the school who had not managed to finish second year, understood the problem.

A person who starts work at CIM today has to know how to read and write. Today, if you don't know how to read, you don't enter this place. Today it's a question of "Do you have ninth class?" If not, there's no work. Those of us already inside fight to learn to read here at CIM.

Laurinda Zibia, 36 years, cleaner  
1983 Passed first year

Subsequent studies interrupted by pregnancy/maternity leave.

There was clearly a lot of ambivalence about what to do about this and whether you should really stop spending the time on studying or not. Atalia Macamo's musings point to the power of literacy, even in the face of evidence of its impotence.

You earn the same, illiterate or with fourth grade. Even when you have fifth or sixth grade, you earn the same. I have friends who got to fourth grade -- but it didn't change anything. Even so, it's worth it. Maybe in another firm you can earn more with fourth grade. When people are educated, they have to do well.

(Interview with Atalia Macamo, July 14, 1985)

### *It takes time to survive*

At the same time the workers were recalculating whether literacy was worth it, weighing the value of a certificate in relation to increased pay or exit from manual labour, there were new calculations about the time needed for survival schemes. As the security situation deteriorated and the economic crisis

became more acute, the investment of time in education began to enter in conflict with time needed for these survival schemes. Many workers depended as much on their second and third jobs as on their first.

The war and the economic situation were never far from people's minds. In many conversations, workers spoke movingly of how hard it was to study with the pressing problems at hand. Momade Iaca, an older worker put it this way.

You go to literacy classes just to be marked present. Your wits aren't there. They're at home with the problems of living. Your wits and your heart aren't there. At the end of each month, when the rations have run out, it's worse. You go out the door with your wife saying to you, "There's nothing here in the house to eat".

Momade Iaca, Supplies Dept., 50 years

Passed first year 1982

Passed second year in 1983 and fourth class in 1984

Both women and men were constantly preoccupied with the situation in their homes and the lack of food and clothing for their children. Moving from the activity of the work sector to the quiet of the classroom, many of them suddenly focussed on going home at the end of the day to face nothing with which to prepare an evening meal for their families.

When you think a lot about your life, you can't bring yourself to study. What do we have to eat in the house when I get home from work. Here I can go to the mess and eat well. There at home we have nothing. Here in the factory I have a uniform, I have something to put on, but there at home, there is no clothing for the children.

Cristina Mavale, Sacks Warehouse, 42 years

Passed first year 1983; Failed second year 1984

Passed second year 1985

The inability of urban wages to guarantee the reproduction of the work force, while exacerbated by the crisis caused by the war and economic destabilization tactics of the apartheid regime, was not in itself a new situation. Urban wages had always been extremely low, and even in colonial days, as we have seen above, many workers found contracts in the mines in South Africa a more viable option. The interviews with the CIM workers found virtually all of them still actively attached to the rural economy. Many referred to wives who "did nothing". When further pressed, they explained that their wives did nothing "except tend a machamba". This "machamba" or family plot historically had been absolutely fundamental for reproduction of the work

force, with basic foods such as maize, beans, cassava and sweet potatoes supplied not through market purchases drawing on urban wages but through household production. It was this invisible work of women that allowed the patterns of semi-proletarianization, keeping urban wages low, and urban workers with one foot firmly embedded still in the peasant economy. (Roesch:1985; First:1983)

Many CIM workers spoke of wives who were there, on the land, or who divided their time between Maputo and their farms according to the agricultural seasons. Part of the present crisis was precisely the choking off of the city from that pattern of production. Terrorist attacks by the MNR throughout the districts of Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane provinces made it impossible for families to travel freely back and forth.

On the face of it, one could ask why more workers did not leave a job paying only 3,300 meticaïs a month for the informal sector. Their tales of week-end and day off activities outside work from contracting themselves as mechanics, plumbers and painters to breeding ducks, tailoring and making home brew all netted incomes much beyond the CIM monthly wage. It became clear, however, that maintaining a position on the payroll at CIM went far beyond what that monthly wage itself represented. Full-time wage employment legitimized the workers' status as city residents and gave them access to the urban rations programme. The calculations of survival schemes, weighing off continuing in wage employment at CIM at 3,300 meticaïs per month, about enough in itself to buy the oil and soap regularly missing from the city's monthly rationing scheme, or striking off into self-employment were presumably also influenced by memories of "Operation Production". In mid-1983, in the name of dealing with Maputo's overcrowded situation and tackling "unproductive" city dwellers, large numbers of people without work cards and residence cards in order were sent off to underpopulated Niassa province in northern Mozambique. Now officially recognized as an enormous mistake, its memory presumably persuaded many workers to hold on to their wage employment even when salaries bore no relation to urban costs.

On the positive side, CIM employment provided vitally needed inputs for many of the survival schemes. For many who lived near the factory in Matola, keeping pigs or ducks was an important source of income. Being a CIM worker meant that you had the right to buy animal rations each month. Many workers who earned only 3,300 meticaïs per month on a CIM salary used the CIM connection as a means of having feed for ducks which they could sell on the parallel market at 1500-2000 meticaïs each. Others used CIM rations as the basis for setting up their wives as traders, selling off the factory produce of pasta, sweets or chocolate that each worker could buy each month, or

setting up a home brew from maize. These schemes earned a great deal more than a CIM monthly salary. There was often a need to tend to these survival schemes in daylight hours, the more so as the security situation in Matola deteriorated making it hazardous to be around after dark. Many workers opted to leave aside secondary school studies and concentrate on economic activities.

Many people began to raise pigs when CIM closed its farm and sold off the animals at reasonable prices. These days I get up at four and do chores before catching the bus to work. I fetch water, straw and feed for the pigs. When five in the afternoon rolls around, I'm off to fetch water again for the animals. I can't manage to look after my children on the salary I get – it's the pigs that save us. What's the use of staying on after five to study when it's raising pigs that guarantees the situation for my children.

Fernando Murrija, 49 years  
Head of wheat handling section  
Finished Products Warehouse

Alfredo Joel, a 47 year old handler in the Finished Products Warehouse, captured the dilemma of the CIM workers. As a young boy, he had come to Maputo from Zavala district in Inhambane. He remembered that there, "only the "regulo's" children got to go to school". In Maputo, he spent five years as a domestic and learned Portuguese. From 1961-1964, he was in the Portuguese army. After that he got his first contract to work in South Africa. He went five times to work in South Africa. In 1982, he started to work at CIM. He is in the Finished Products Warehouse and his work there now consists of selecting out the torn sacks and substituting them for good ones. While at CIM, he has been able to do literacy. He passed the literacy exam in 1982 and took two years to pass the second year exam, but did so with high marks in 1984. He has not continued at the school, explaining that his work on the team in the Finished Products Warehouse is such that "it's difficult to leave the team".

His salary was only 1,020 meticaïs when he entered in 1982 but has not gone to the minimum monthly wage of 3,300 meticaïs. His wife has a machamba on the outskirts of the city and produces maize, beans and cassava. He has five children, three of them school age.

When you're studying, your heart is not in it. It's with your children back home who have no food or clothing. The black market is full of capulanas (African cloth) – but how am I going to manage 6,000 meticaïs to buy one? I want to return to South Africa. I need to go there. I need clothing and shoes for the children. The money I get here doesn't do for anything.

Alfredo Joel, handler, 47 years

The war being waged by the South African-backed insurgents was a constant pressure as well, integrally related to the worsening economic situation. During much of the time I was there, the residential areas of large numbers of workers had bandit activity as almost a nightly occurrence. Most of the workers had families in the rural districts of the southern provinces, where ambushes and massacres were regular events.

What's the use of my studying when my son who is young is not in school? He was in third grade in Gaza province. We had to flee from the bandits. They closed the school. Now they're insisting on a certificate to prove that he was in third grade. Do they think that the teachers had time to issue certificates before fleeing the bandits? The schools here in Matola today are just like the black market. If it were possible for me to get 5,000 meticaís, my son would be studying.

(Interview with Celina Joao, February, 1986)

With the deteriorating security situation came the decision in March 1986 to change the time of night school. A decision was made to begin classes at 4:30 in the afternoon, allowing half an hour of classes still within work time, and end them at 7:00, five nights a week instead of four. This coincided with the new shift plan that moved from three shifts of eight hours to two shifts of 12 hours. This permitted shift changes at 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., avoiding the need to transport workers in and out of their communities at 11:00 p.m.

### *"Motivation" – do workers want to study?*

This daily negotiation of time for literacy was completely invisible. The assumption on the part of school and factory administration, and indeed the teachers, was that attendance and punctuality were entirely controlled by the workers themselves and that absenteeism and lateness were questions of individual motivation. The opening of the school year, for example, included speeches from management and party representatives, all of which focussed on the need for workers to avail themselves of the opportunity to study created for them by the factory. There were strong pleas for attendance and punctuality, as if the even stronger pressures on management to guarantee production did not enter into conflict with attendance and punctuality at literacy classes.

### OPENING THE SCHOOL YEAR

The teachers weren't there – nor people from the city education office. We also had a double booking for the meeting room, our opening



colliding with a professional training programme that brought Cardoso Muendane, the Industrial Director there to project a video. The solution put forward was to have the invited guests from management, party etc. spend longer going through the literacy display while the students sat about outside waiting for it all to begin.

The speeches from management and party and worker organization officials touched mainly on questions of discipline and attendance. Nobody left more motivated to study because it was useful for their lives.

(Field Notes February 16, 1986)

Today I met with the teachers to hear their thoughts about the two discussion documents. One of the most fascinating parts was their response to my observation that workers lacked self-confidence. Eduardo thinks it isn't a question of lack of self-confidence at all. It is really lack of interest. If you insist on an answer, the person is able to give a reply - which for Eduardo proves that it was really a lack of interest.

Lopes also thinks that absenteeism is intentional. He went on further to say that he thinks that when it gets to be time for classes, the workers calculate where there will be fewest demands on them during the next two hours, and make their decisions about attendance accordingly.

Aurelio asked if this logic wouldn't be one for full attendance, since surely the classroom is virtually always less demanding than the sectors.

(Field Notes March 14, 1986)

What is interesting is the distance between the two accounts. The teachers assume the workers to be resistant to literacy, calculating how to do least. The workers own accounts of their lives speak only of work demands from the sector, and also a sense of solidarity with fellow workers such that on occasion they opt to stay in the section and work, knowing that their absence will make it difficult for their colleagues to carry on.

All of the workers accepted without question the appropriateness of their shop floor boss making the decision on attendance at literacy. It was as if attendance at literacy classes was just one among the many work orders that might be given for any particular day. There was no sense of having a right to study, or any way to protect your time to study from other demands.

Today there's not much work to do. You can go to school. That's how it is in our section. The head tells us when we can go.

Major Fraguane, Warehouse 2

There are a lot of problems related to production. For our company not to lose money, we have to stay in the Silos and work.

Augusto Bernardo, handler, 38 years  
1982 Passed first year;

1984 Passed second year despite 77 days absent  
1985 Did not do third year

Even workers at third year level, ready to do exams that gave them a primary school leaving certificate, did not think it appropriate or possible to negotiate a decision to send them to work at another site the month before the exam, hence missing the final review and the exam itself.

I didn't do the exam because I was sent to do a job in the Candy Factory. I counted on being able to take the exam at the second sitting but there wasn't one.

Fabiao Cossa, welder's assistant, 38 years  
Passed first year in 1982 and second year in 1984;  
did not take third year exam in 1985

Many workers referred matter-of-factly to regular work demands that, by definition, ruled out attendance at literacy classes. The reasons were infinitely variable on any given day, and could range from plumbing to pineapples.

My problem is that I have jobs regularly that take me away from the main factory [where the school is located].

Luis Uamba, plumber, 47 years  
Passed second year in 1984

I want to study but the time-table doesn't allow it. We're very few workers in the mess. On the days we serve pineapples for dessert, we have to cut them up. There's no way we can get to classes.

Albertina Carlos, kitchen assistant, 43 years  
Passed first year in 1982  
Missed 1983 exam because of pregnancy  
Passed second year in 1984  
Missed 1985 exam because of pregnancy

The observation of individual women and men and their own accounts of their lives made the texture and diversity of time constraints on the workers quite visible. Making time for literacy was not simple. For some, the rational choice given limited energies and enormous needs was to dispense with literacy as of little use for the crisis situation they were living. What was interesting was that the official discourse persisted in constructing worker motivation as the reason, and this as somehow mysterious. In the first contact with the Director General after I started to work at CIM, a chance meeting as he shepherded a delegation on a tour of the factory, the immediate thought that came to his head was the request that my research explain why the workers didn't come to literacy!

*"School" time and "work" time for the teachers*

Time for schooling for the teachers posed itself in very different ways. The four teachers at CIM during the period of my research were located very differently in the factory social organization, a situation typical of what existed in many work place literacy centers. Lopes Chigoiane, whom I had first met and worked with in 1984 when we did the photo story with the first year students, was now teaching second year. He was also a full-time CIM employee based in the training department. After being away from the factory for several months during 1985, training for the militia, he was back full-time. He divided his days between lesson preparation, teaching and the administrative and clerical tasks related to the school in general. He was also studying in the CIM night school, enrolled in sixth class. He seemed to handle his multiple roles with equanimity. His training for teaching was limited to the DNEA courses but he had a calm presence in the classroom and an instinct for teaching and picking up learning difficulties that made him quite effective.

Pedro Chivute, the third year teacher, was also a full-time worker at CIM. He had started work at CIM in 1981, with seventh class and formal training as a primary school teacher. He came to CIM to escape the teaching profession, but was admitted as a teacher with the understanding that, in his spare time, he would work in some sector of the factory. When I met him, he was working in doing clerical tasks in the Finished Products Warehouse in his non-teaching hours. Vague mention seemed to have been made of possibilities that in future he would get training in some specific area, a dream strongly held onto, nonetheless, by Pedro.

Four years later, Pedro was determined to get out. His performance in the classroom was one of boredom and arrogance, putting down the students, especially the women, with what to me seemed incredible cheek. In retrospect, perhaps it was in the hopes that I'd tell on him and cause him to be removed from the classroom, his deepest desire. Pedro saw teaching as a dead end.

I want to be in a sector where I have a profession, a future. Everybody who entered when I did already has done training - they're clerks or ??? I'm the only one who has nothing. I have the right to be trained in something. It's not that I don't want to work. I want to - but I have the right to get training in something.

(Interview with Pedro Chivute, January 1986)

For Pedro, the high failure rates of the students were seen as threatening. He felt that high literacy failure rates were a negative reflection on him, and that they resulted from a situation created by the factory. The workers had other

priorities, but since the factory made it mandatory for all workers up to the age of 45 to do literacy, they were compelled to come.

Pedro: If people were to pass by the school, they would come to the conclusion that I'm not doing anything. What I'm doing is not showing any results. There is little success. The adults who come here have other priorities. They come only because the factory makes it mandatory for them to come. Look how it was last year. Hardly anybody passed.

Judith: What do you think were the main reasons that only 7 of the 27 passed?

Pedro: These things I've just mentioned are important factors.

(Field Notes, January 16, 1986)

For Pedro, the fact of no books and completion of only a tiny proportion of the programme were not the most important factors. Much less were there reflections on the broader socio-economic situation that put survival questions on the agenda and made school certificates worthless. "Lack of motivation" of the workers, the fact of literacy being obligatory for them and not a matter of free choice were, for him, the central questions.

There were two other teachers during the period of my research. Carlos Mutimkuio was a second year teacher during 1985 but in 1986, was transferred from CIM to another center. Eduardo Zucula taught in the Candy Factory during 1985 and in 1986, moved to the main factory complex to teach third year. Carlos and Eduardo were not CIM employees. They were both "professional educators", full time employees of the Ministry of Education for adult education. The title "professional educator" was a much inflated language to designate sixth class graduates with a six month training course.

The assumption of the planners when the course for professional educators was designed was of an expanding Adult Education Sub-system in which adults doing third year would need trained teachers, particularly in the communal villages and indeed, throughout the rural areas. The "professional educators" were therefore to be trained specifically to work in rural villages, teaching third year, giving support to first and second year teachers, and in general creating a dynamic presence of adult education in the countryside.

The reality was far different. Recruitment and training in the six month course had all the weaknesses of the shorter courses already outlined in Chapter 4. Conditions of lodging and food were not easy to organize in the rural areas once the adult educator arrived, particularly with terrorist actions already so drastically altering the texture of rural life. The sixth class graduates, even if originally from rural areas, had had a taste of city life. Neither they nor their families thought placement in a rural village an

attractive option. Nor were students for their classes readily forthcoming, with peasants struggling to survive the crisis even less predisposed than urban workers to make time for literacy.

The upshot was that many of the professional educators like Carlos Eduardo were placed in urban centers instead. There most of them were greatly underemployed, responsible only for one class session per day. At the same time, they enjoyed the salary that had been allocated to the professional educators after the six month course of 6,000 meticals per month. This was not only almost twice as much as most of the students. It was also more than most other education officials at district level made, a factor that made their integration into the district structure the more problematic.

Carlos was 20 when he started working at CIM and came directly to CIM after his six month course. He was from Chibuto, a thriving district capital in Maputo province prior to the era of MNR attacks, and came from an educated family. His father was a guard in Chibuto and had second class, as did his mother. His two older brothers had fifth and ninth class respectively. One of his older sisters had seventh class and taught primary school. The sister his own age had fifth class. Carlos himself had completed sixth class and the six month course. He had registered in seventh class but the Maputo school in which he had done sixth class could not locate his records and so he was forced to drop out of seventh class for lack of a school certificate! He had two younger brothers, one in sixth class where Carlos' older brother worked for the Ministry of Defence, and one in fifth class in Maputo.

I met Carlos first in April, 1984, as the rather shy second year teacher who was in his third month of teaching. He was teaching second year for the second time round when I returned in 1985, but had been transferred by the time I came back from the trip to Latin America.

Eduardo had come to CIM when he was just 18 and spent the first year teaching in the Candy Factory. He was then transferred to the main factory where in 1986 he taught mathematics in the third year programme. This occupied only a small part of each day. This left many hours alone in the staff room with the newspaper and the radio, preparing his own lessons and also his homework for the city night school where he was doing seventh class. When asked about his main problems in teaching he said they were the poor results, the difficulty in finding patience to explain things again and again, and the organizational problems like not receiving the books until April the year before. Eduardo got little support or supervision. His only contact with the City Directorate of Education and Culture to whom he was responsible was in a Saturday meeting for all professional educators.

For the three teachers, then, schooling represented very different things. They were not, however, pulled away from the classroom by conflicting demands on their time as were the worker-students. The demands pulling them away from the classroom were of their own making.

The worker/students were, however, subjected constantly to conflicting demands on their time. The school and party officials and workers' organization put pressures on them to attend classes and assumed absences as of their own making. The shop floor boss's rôle in impeding attendance at literacy classes was never a subject of discussion and surfaced only rarely in interviews.

I was alone in the section during the month of the exam. The head said I couldn't leave. I tried to get support from the school. I talked to Pedro. He was our teacher in third year. No results.

Francisco Muchanga, mechanic's assistant, 37 years

Passed first year in 1983 with perfect score

Passed second year in 1984 with 90% average

Did not do third year exam

The negotiation by worker-students of permission from their shop floor bosses to attend classes was delicate. Even more delicate, however, was the negotiation of written authorization not to attend. Such authorizations were a necessity for the worker since that was the only way to escape the pressures from the teacher and the school director about absences was to have a note from your section head justifying them. This put the section heads in a delicate position. To furnish written justifications in the name of production priorities was to run the risk that they themselves would come under pressure from the management for not allowing their workers to study. The management, in turn, was subject to pressures from higher level Ministry of Industry quotas for literacy and party pressure to eradicate it.

Few students referred to the hassles of getting their absences justified; one can imagine, however, that many preferred to be viewed as delinquent and unmotivated rather than negotiate with their heads for written justifications which could ultimately cause problems for the section heads which would be played out against the workers.

Our section is very small and we have a lot of work to do. I asked my head for a paper to justify my absence, but it wasn't given to me.

Francisco Xiconela, handler, 47 years

Finished Products Warehouse

In some sections, the conflicting demands about time for schooling and production were experienced by the workers as real power struggles between

themselves and their immediate bosses. Many of the section heads had only primary school certificates. As we have seen above, there was a concerted effort in 1981 to do an intensive course for lower level management, some of whom had never had the chance to study, others of whom needed their prior studies "certified". A group of 15 men did the course. Five enrolled in fifth class, the first year of lower secondary, the next year. Not one of them completed it successfully. Some actually did the exams and failed. Other did not qualify to write the exams because they had been absent too often.

It would seem that the positions of veteran workers in lower level management positions were not seriously threatened by new employees coming in with sixth or ninth class, because these new employees had absolutely no work experience. Even those coming from technical schools had not really had enough exposure to factory situations to be very competent. The possibility of other veteran workers gaining academic qualifications that surpassed those of the section heads was perceived as a real threat, however, and several workers spoke strongly of being thwarted in their desire to study.

I completed fourth class here at CIM. I requested permission to study in 1984 and passed fifth class. I was working shifts. At times, the section head forbid me to go. The people in charge were not studying and they didn't want to let their subordinates get ahead of them in what they knew. I know a lot of people who want to study and can't. Many of them figure it out like this. Since they won't give me permission to study, studying or not studying amounts to the same thing. Even if you study, you stay in the same place. It's really not worth it to study. You already know that you aren't going to get any benefit from it. I can tell you how it was with my shift. We were ten. Five went to school and five stayed. We made a plan. But the management reduced the numbers. There was no way. Even when somebody went to the toilet, it was difficult for the others.

I can also tell you how I came to leave my old section. In December 1985, after the exams, I went to Inhambane for vacation and returned later than January 1, when I should have been back. There were big problems with transport because of the bandits in that area. Since I was late returning, I had to provide a justification. The justification needed the signature of the section head. He demanded that I indicate whether I'd returned to study or to work, and gave me to understand that if I replied, to study I would be in trouble. I replied that I had returned to work. Later in February when classes began, I went to request permission to attend. This triggered another crisis. I finally went to the head of the Social Services Department. She got one of the staff from that department to speak with my section head. The result was that I was offered the possibility of doing a course and a transfer to another section.

Mario Muhai, 28 years



Muhai, by the time he was transferred in 1985, had worked for six years at CIM. He had begun work at CIM when he was 19 and was doing a semi-skilled job in his section that involved some handling of figures on control sheets. The section hierarchy was seemingly happier to lose a young, experienced worker to another sector than to have him begin to compete with veteran workers for promotions.

Roberto Tivane was another worker who felt he was being blocked by his colleagues. Tivane has begun work at CIM in 1961 when he was just 18 years old. He worked for a year, left to work at another factory for four years, and returned to CIM in 1966. He worked in the Biscuit Factory and earned 570 escudos at the time. Shortly after independence, he was made a section head. His salary increased to 4,500 escudos in 1976. It has remained virtually at that level until today, increasing only to 5,000.

When the Biscuit Factory was closed down in 1982, Tivane moved to another section. He was made a section head there. Later he was given a semi-skilled job, inspecting and maintaining equipment. He also took up schooling at this time. Tivane had had a chance to go as far as third class as a child and in 1982, did the adult education programme and got his certificate of basic primary schooling with high marks. He then proceeded to fifth class which he completed in 1983. During 1984 and 1985, he tried to complete sixth class, but felt only antagonism from his colleagues in the section.

I did fourth class in 1982 and fifth class the following year. I was in sixth class in 1984 and 1985. I was working in shifts during this whole period and it was a hard life. When I did the shift that entered at eleven at night, I caught the bus for the three o'clock shift in order to go to classes at half past five. When we got out of classes, I went to sleep for a bit before starting the shift at eleven. My section head didn't support me very much and I had a lot of absences. In 1984, I didn't even do the exam. In 1985, a colleague went on vacation in the last month of classes and I had to work more to cover everything during his absence. I did the exams but I had lost the geometry classes and I failed mathematics.

In our section of the factory, the majority of the heads have only fourth class. They don't want to see a worker from the section get to do sixth class. They do everything to stop him. I am taking a rest this year. Next year, I'll start again. I want to get to at least ninth class. I already have a son doing eleventh class at Francisco Manyanga school and a daughter who is in ninth class at Josina Machel school. I am doing everything to guarantee that they continue in their studies. If I bring up a President, a minister, an ambassador, a doctor, an engineer - it's a contribution. My work will not have been in vain.

(Interview with Roberto Tivane, March 6, 1986)

*Schooling time measured in "lessons"*

During the period of my research for this study, education was measured by the time spent in the classroom. The dynamic links between literacy and life, classroom and community, that had been part of the spontaneous literacy movement at the time of independence were long in the past. There was neither encouragement nor acceptance of other ways of learning – through, for example, independent work with spouses, children, or work mates. Time lost from classes was truly lost. There was no suggestion that workers go ahead on their own, doing the math exercises and reading lesson on their own time. There was no recognition that many adults had already had some access to schooling outside the factory and that others through home, community and work activities actually used reading and writing skills on a daily basis and therefore had a possibility of advancing at a rhythm apart from the daily dose administered by the teacher. There was no encouragement to use literacy skills in "life", no push to read newspapers, write letters, fill in forms, debate ideas, work out family budgets. To the degree that the curriculum materials pointed in these directions, the teachers seemed to take pains to keep the lessons at an abstract level, simulating the activity rather than trying to link the literary classroom with day to day situations.

At the time of the fifth Anniversary of state intervention into CIM, I brought a whole page from the daily newspaper, *Noticias* into the classroom and, in the moments before the class was to begin, gave it to Santos Nakale to read. He read it without any problem and was enjoying it since it was all about his workplace. On that afternoon, only one other person appeared. Nonetheless, the teacher, Lopes, suddenly cut off the newspaper reading to start the "class" with two people. The idea that adult education is for life skills and not to pass an exam just doesn't exist.

(Problematic Areas in ABE at CIM  
First Discussion Document March 1986)

Reflecting on it further, I suppose there was nothing in the teachers' experience to make them think such initiatives would be applauded. It is possible that my presence might even have thwarted spontaneous building on the newspaper article. Lopes might have felt that with me present as an observer, he had to "give" a lesson at all costs. The more likely explanation, however, is that complete fixation on "giving the lesson". The imperative of "THE LESSON" was not easy to set aside for Lopes or indeed any other teacher. I remember looking at the photo story again long after we had done it and discovering something written on the blackboard I hadn't seen before.

Lopes had still felt the need to put a lesson heading up on the board. He obviously had not known quite what to call it, so put up:

Date: June 23, 1984

Subject: Portuguese – Modern Lesson

For Lopes, an activity that stepped out of “giving” the packaged “lesson” and engaged the workers in using language skills to talk about their actual lives was a modern lesson.



Figure 6: *Making a photostory – Lopes' "modern lesson"*

The classroom was used only during the few hours each day in which classes were actually being given. Literacy became the daily lesson, with “giving” and “receiving” classes as the normal way to refer to the educational process. What was “measurable” in evaluating literacy was time spent in classes.

The major preoccupation of the national, provincial and district education offices was to monitor literacy attendance at literacy classes. Workers could not sit for the exams unless they had attended a certain percentage of classes. Education officers visiting literacy centers assessed the classes in terms of "participation", by which was meant not active teaching-learning activities but physical presence in the classroom.

The second method of evaluating literacy was through national exams which were held only and tested only reading and writing and math skills. The repertoire of literacy skills turning on questions of communicative competence and critical consciousness were completely lost to view. The teachers themselves, in Mozambique, as elsewhere, taught to the exam. A conversation with Aurelio, the school director, about the difficulties the teachers were having with the oral work and their tendency to jump over it for the reading and writing exercises brought the observation that the oral part wasn't on the exam. For Aurelio too, this was a valid reason to leave it out.

After some time getting into the real world of how literacy was working, teaching in a way that interacted with the actual lives of the students began to seem illusory, a fantasy of mine not connected with the real world. An incident along the way, however, rekindled the hopes for a different approach. Pedro was ill one day when I had brought another colleague along to observe classes. Instead of cancelling the class, there was a decision made to take advantage of the presence of Henrique N'Guiraze who was on a visit to Maputo. N'Guiraze at the time was the head of adult education services in Cabo Delgado province.

I sat in on N'Guiraze's afternoon session. Absolutely fascinating. In the hands of a teacher who knows where (s)he want to go with a particular session, and has a genuine interest in the students' experiences, the classroom atmosphere is totally different, with genuine participation, interest, humour. The lesson was on science and its contributions to agriculture – improved seeds, pesticides and insecticides, etc. I tried to take it down verbatim.

*N'Guiraze:* So how many seeds do you usually plant in one hole?

*Student:* Three or four seeds.




*N'Guiraze:* Why?

*Student:* Well, you can't be sure if they're good seeds. Bugs get in them. Some won't germinate.

*N'Guiraze:* But that's with local seeds isn't it? With treated seeds, how many do you plant in one hole?

*Student:* Oh, just one.

1. Nome: \_\_\_\_\_

2.  3.  4. 

a \_\_\_\_\_ o \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_

está estão é

5. A Rita \_\_\_\_\_ no Posto de Saúde.

6. Ela \_\_\_\_\_ moe do Bernado.

Hoje temos vacinas no Posto de Saúde.  
As vacinas são para os nossos bebés.  
Todos devem estar no Posto às onze horas.

7. A que horas há vacinas?  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Para quem são as vacinas?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Nós, moçambicanos, gostamos muito de tomar chá. O nosso chá vem das plantações da Emocha na Zambézia. A Emocha é uma empresa com grandes plantações de chá e muitos trabalhadores. A Josina trabalha na Emocha. Ela e outros trabalhadores colhem as folhas de chá.

1. O que faz a Josina  
Resposta \_\_\_\_\_

2. O que é a Emochá?  
Resposta \_\_\_\_\_

3. Da que Província vem o chá?  
Resposta \_\_\_\_\_

4. colhe colheu  
Ela ontem \_\_\_\_\_ muito chá


5. 

Figure 7: First and Second Year Literacy Exams

*N' Guiraze:* Why?

*Student:* Well you can be sure it will grow.

*N' Guiraze:* But if you don't have seeds you can count on, you have to put in three or four. Is that it?

*Student:* Yes, or maybe even five.

*N' Guiraze:* But now what happens if you plant five and four germinate. You've got four stalks of maize coming from the same hole. What do you do?

*Students:* You do nothing! You just wait for them to grow and give you plenty of maize.

*N' Guiraze:* But doesn't the agricultural technician advise you to leave just one, so you can grow one strong, healthy plant?

*Student 1:* You mean take shoots of new maize and pull them out?

*Student 2:* But if four germinate, you'll have more maize.

*N' Guiraze:* But won't they crowd each other out? Isn't it better to have one healthy stalk?

*Student:* You mean throw out shoots of new maize? That's unthinkable.

Finally a real dialogue about something of importance in their lives. All discussing. All animated. The desire to get into the discussion outweighed the inhibitions about Portuguese.

Conclusions:

1. The teacher is a huge factor.

2. These workers are truly peasants. I'm almost certain no discussion about urban industrial matters could have generated such interest.

(Field Notes June 26, 1985)

The moments of reaffirming a pedagogy of empowerment, however, were few. In general, the institutional organization of time in the CIM "school" tended to rule out biography and local experience in favour of a graded curriculum taught for the purposes of reproduction in an exam. It also placed workers in a situation of complex and competing demands for their time, forcing them to work out a *modus vivendi* between the pressures of school and shop floor superiors and their own and their family's survival strategies.

## CHAPTER 7

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# *Classrooms – spaces for regulated communication(s)*

Take, for example, an educational institution: the disposal of its space, the meticulous regulations which govern its internal life, the different activities which are organized there, the diverse persons who live there or meet one another, each with his [sic] own functions, his well-defined character. . . . The activity which ensures apprenticeship and the acquisitions of aptitudes or types of behaviour is developed there by means of a whole ensemble of regulated communications (lessons, questions and answers, orders, exhortations, coded signs of obedience, differentiation marks of the value of each person and of the levels of knowledge) and by the means of a whole series of power processes (enclosure, surveillance, reward and punishment, the pyramidal hierarchy).

(Foucault 1982:787)

Far from linking schooling with daily realities of workplace, home and community, the CIM classrooms were spaces reserved for a very particular kind of communication(s). At CIM, as elsewhere, all efforts were made to create literacy centers which, as much as possible, duplicated the forms of the schools of the formal education system. CIM, however, had more means at its disposal than most factories. The classrooms were organized in a way that would have been the envy of many workplaces – and indeed official schools! The layout of each classroom included a more than adequate number of adult size desks, a teacher's desk and chair and a blackboard. The physical arrangement of the classrooms was uniform: the larger teacher's desks were at the front of the classroom alongside the blackboard and a pointer. The students'



desks were in rows. The students chose their places at the beginning of the school year and after that, went back to the same desk each day.

The classrooms were used only for schooling, with the classes of literacy and post-literacy using the space for the two or three hour lesson periods during the day, and secondary school students using the space at night<sup>1</sup>. Apart from these hours, the rooms were vacant. The walls of the classrooms were completely bare. No graphics, clippings, calendars or material of any kind was to be found.

The only people entering the classrooms were the teachers, the students and representatives of the Social Services Department. In the early days of literacy, there had been frequent visitors. Now, people from the Party, from the OMM or OTM, locally or nationally, rarely visited. Even the visits of Ministry of Education officials had dwindled to almost nothing. The only people entering regularly were the students, the teachers and the school director, Aurelio.

### *Routines and rituals for regulated communications*

The classroom was a space for regulated communication(s). It was characterized by routines and rituals within which the workers were silenced or found voices, through which their sense of competence or failure was reproduced. The regulated communications of the classroom included the imposition of a particular language – Portuguese – and what's more a "correct" way of speaking it. These regulated communications turned on the establishment of particular texts, on packaging knowledge and learning into something called "lessons", on particular kinds of questions and answers, encoded signs of authority and obedience, and on ways of placing value on certain kinds of knowledge and experience and denigrating others. All of these in concert constituted a form of "doing class", including a number of practices for establishing ways of speaking and for silencing, for consolidating a sense of being a legitimate – or illegitimate – participant in particular kinds of discursive practices. (Corrigan:1987; Freire and Shor:1987; Simon:1987; Rockhill:1987)

The regulation of communication first, then, was based on the imposition of a language. The language option for the national literacy programme was Portuguese. As we have seen above, the decision to mount the national literacy campaigns in Portuguese had been taken when the first national literacy campaigns were launched in 1978. The reports to the Ribaue Seminar in 1975 about the experiences of the various provinces in literacy referred to literacy centers teaching in local languages in some provinces and special studies

being done in others about how to consolidate a spoken second language, i.e. Portuguese, as a basis for literacy. Nonetheless, the general recommendations from the seminar included a recommendation that Portuguese should be used for literacy. Where local languages were in use, they should serve to support a gradual transition to Portuguese.

Schooling in the literacy classroom thus took people from the varying mixtures of mother tongue use and Portuguese that constituted their normal language practices in their homes and communities, and indeed on the shop floor, into a world in which the only language permitted was Portuguese. The distance between the classroom and daily languages practices varied considerably throughout the country. For rural Mozambicans, the distance was vast. They were put in the contradictory position of having to learn something not in use of everyday life. They could not use Portuguese without learning it, but neither could they learn it without using it. For the CIM workers, dwelling in an urban environment, with children in schools where Portuguese was the language of instruction and a broader social environment that brought them into contact with Portuguese on a daily basis, the distance was not nearly so great.

The practice of rigidly imposition of Portuguese in the literacy classroom was not in response to a specific policy directive of the Ministry of Education. The teachers, in fact, got mixed signals about language with the new curriculum materials. The language programme in the new literacy curriculum was designed to build growing skills and confidence in communicative practices. There had been intense debate within the team that designed and tested the new curriculum materials in 1982 about how to do literacy in a second language. The manuals recommended the use of first languages according to the language skills of the actual participants, particularly in the first year programme.

Both students and teachers, however, assumed Portuguese to be the only language appropriate for the classroom. This was so internalized by the workers themselves that I actually heard one chiding another for speaking "dialect", before the class began, saying that you couldn't do so in the school. Many of them had had direct experience of colonial classrooms with their special monitors just to detect students who reverted to first languages in the classroom in order to have them punished. Others had had a social learning of how schooling was done that established immediately the question of language as a key factor. And of course the social context included a powerful discourse around becoming "civilized" and a legitimate "citizen" which turned on proficiency in the Portuguese language. This discourse included

systematic denigration of first languages as belonging to a milieu of savagery and backwardness.

The social value given to the Portuguese language and the Mozambican languages exacerbates learning difficulties. There is an acceptance of the colonial attitude in which Portuguese is a language while Changana and Ndau are merely dialects. Portuguese is valued as the language of civilization, of Europe of the gentry, while Changana and Xitsua are disparaged as bush dialects. The over-valuing of Portuguese and the under-valuing of the African languages serves to mystify the question of speaking Portuguese. It is not treated as a means of social communication; implicitly there is an assumption being made of Portuguese as the language of a higher strata, almost inaccessible by definition. Thus the educatees enter without the slightest confidence of their capacity to speak, much less master the Portuguese language.

Problematic Areas in ABE at CIM  
First Discussion Document, Feb.1985

Typical conversations in the interviews with literacy students ran as follows:

- Question:* What language can you speak?  
*Answer:* I just speak landene [Changana word for dialect]  
*Question:* But what are the names of the languages that you speak?  
*Answer:* I just speak Bitonga and Changana.  
*Question:* And what else? (Pause) You also speak Portuguese don't you – because that's what you and I are speaking right now.  
*Answer:* Oh, but I just speak it a little. And I don't speak it correctly.

Although the literacy manual attempted to tackle frontally the question of literacy in a second language, and, as indicated above, explicitly suggested in the first year programme that each classroom use the combination of first language and second language deemed appropriate for the language capacities of the students, this was not heard by the literacy trainers and teachers. The training programmes for the new materials touched on this point in presenting the language methodology, but obviously not with sufficient weight, given the sensitivity of the question. The assumption by teacher and students that the only language to be spoken in the classroom was Portuguese served to silence a number of students.

There was absolutely no attempt to give value to proficiency in first language skills while second language skills were being attained, nor any effort to promote the application of new second language skills, i.e. new reading skills in Portuguese applied to reading in first languages.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO READ?

I discovered today that people don't know that now they can read Portuguese, they can also begin to read Changana. It's a big discovery for them to find that they can read not just words in Portuguese but words in other languages, *including* their own first language. They thought they could only read the words they had already "had" in the textbooks! I asked Aurelio to translate two phrases into Changana in order to have something to show people how they could apply their new reading skills to Changana. "Nini machamba a Manjacaze. Ningadzala a mavele, midzombula ni tinhalá." It means, "I have a farm in Manjacaze. I grow onions, tomatoes and cassava." Interesting that Aurelio was so full of hesitations about doing the translation – and went into an explanation of the complications between the various written forms of Changana and Ronga.

(Field Notes January 7, 1986)

Once armed with my new phrase, I had many people sound it out with their new-found reading skills and with smiles mixing sheepishness and pleasure and other emotions harder to interpret, they suddenly clicked to the fact that they were reading something in their own first language. It felt like a very emotionally loaded moment. I felt very conscious of my foreignness – and the unusualness of foreigners stepping into that language world. Since I was the one who had written out the sentence in Changana and helped them read it, they were immediately intrigued with whether I knew more. The foreignness I felt was not resentment that I had intruded into their world but more a sense of wonder, that somehow through these symbols on a page that could be "read", our separate worlds had some connection through language.

*The quest for "correct" Portuguese*

As if the imposition of Portuguese was not already fraught with complexities, the classroom also imposed a way of speaking Portuguese. It had to be "good Portuguese". There was never a moment of free expression of ideas that transcended the preoccupation with "correct" expression in Portuguese. This meant that any discussion around theme and content took on a totally artificial character. The main preoccupation of both teacher and student was speech as a test of oral correctness rather than speech as a means of social communication. The notion of growing communicative competence as a legitimate goal in and of itself did not exist.

Massingarela, the technician in the mill, was talking today about the low educational level of the workers and told me about a general assembly

in which a worker spoke up. One of the directors stopped the meeting to note the poor quality of Portuguese spoken by the worker, asking what grade he had and giving a negative commentary on his mastery of the Portuguese language. It seemed to me like an amazingly insensitive thing for a director to do, knowing all too well how limited the opportunities had been for black Mozambicans to learn Portuguese, never mind how hard it was for them to feel themselves legitimate participants to speak out in a public meeting.

What was also interesting was that Massingarella, himself a black Mozambican, certainly did not tell me the story as a comment on the insensitivity of the director. It was told as illustrative of the incapacity of the workers!

(Field Notes March 12, 1986)

The inhibiting dictums of both the imposition of a language, and a "correct" way of speaking that language were powerful tools for silencing. The regulated communications of the classroom were further tilted in the direction of silencing by the tendency of the teachers to cut off any space for unstructured conversation.

The curriculum designers had carried out intensive debates during the elaboration of the materials about how best to develop the kind of classroom atmosphere that would foster growing confidence and competence in language skills. As indicated earlier, a complete revision was made after testing the materials, adding a major oral component into each lesson plan. This took the form of conversations around teaching pictures, dialogues, and structural exercises. Given that the themes were drawn from community and workplace experiences of ordinary people, there was an assumption of classroom space becoming a place of much unregulated conversation through which students would validate their own life experiences and develop confidence in themselves as participants in public discursive practices.

This did not, in fact, prove to be the case. For example, the first unit of the first year book began with greetings in Portuguese. When we wrote the new literacy curriculum, we imagined this daily routine of greetings as a moment for individual conversation with the students, for tapping into their daily lives and feelings. Many of us came from experiences of second language teaching. We anticipated working easily with conversations that moved naturally from greetings to states of health, an easy path to people's lives and thoughts and feelings.

*Teacher:* How are you?

*Student:* I'm sick today

*Teacher:* Oh, I'm sorry to hear it. What do you have?

*Student 1:* How are you this afternoon?

*Student 2:* I'm tired.

*Student 1:* Why? What have you been doing?

Clearly in these kind of conversations, there is no "correct" answer – but only an account of one's experiences, feelings etc., opening the door to individual lives, leaving space for fantasy and humour. We imagined all of this building up confidence in communicative competence and serving to affirm the importance of the students' feelings and experiences. In the daily classroom ritual, however, this got reduced to the entry routine of the teacher, with "Bom dia" (Good morning), "Como estac?" (How are you?), "Estamos bons" (We are fine), all repeated in chorus as done in the primary schools.

These greetings became part of a daily ritual to reproduce the power relation between students and teacher. The entry routine, mutually reproduced by students and teachers, regulated communications in a way that established the social relations of teachers and students as hierarchical. The students arrived from their various workplaces, hot, sweaty, and hungry. They took their places, dirty with grain dust or whitened with flour. The workers tended to come in clusters and assumed silence to be the appropriate stance on arrival at their respective desks. Some looked over the lesson. There were always late arrivals, with workers from some sections coming into the classroom five to fifteen minutes after the starting time.

The teachers, meanwhile, were in the teachers' room next door. When an appropriate time had gone by for all of the students to arrive, the teachers, all of whom were male and a good deal younger than the workers, made their entrances, dressed in white smocks, an adoption of the old Portuguese uniform for the teacher. They took their places at the front, deposited their books on the teacher's desk and formally greeted the students with "Good morning" or "Good afternoon". The students responded with equal formality, in chorus.

The stress on greetings, meant by the curriculum writers to establish an atmosphere of informality and trust and growing confidence in oral skills, instead got incorporated into a classroom ritual of reproducing power. The students waited for the arrival of the teacher. The importance of who was to do the waiting established the position in the hierarchy of power. The all-knowing teachers, wearing the garb of office, arrived last, not divulging that the weighty pursuits left behind in the teachers' room had less to do with the pursuit of learning or lesson preparation than in hearing out the Madonna song that had been on the radio!

*Textbooks as arbiters of knowledge*

The ritual greetings were just one of many organizational forms that established the literacy classroom as totally removed from the ordinary world, a place for regulated communications. The regulation of communication in the classroom was further consolidated by the use of a set of official textbooks for literacy and post-literacy. The only reading materials in the classrooms were the prescribed texts from the Ministry of Education. Other texts were non-existent nor was there any encouragement to bring texts to class such as newspapers or magazines, or indeed written documents that people were having trouble dealing with – letters from the village or the mines in South Africa, children's report cards, bureaucratic forms, etc.

The only writing that was done tended to be in the Portuguese textbooks, which also served as work books. This had the effect of making all other written materials irrelevant. Far from using the text as the springboard for reading and writing skills that could open up the world of written communications to the workers, the literacy teachers confined their work in the classrooms only to the official texts. As indicated earlier, even photo stories done by the workers about their own factory or a newspaper article about CIM were not perceived by the teachers as suitable material for "the lesson". Only the textbooks counted.

The methodology in the language texts was to introduce systematically the syllabic families of the Portuguese language through a key or generic word that tapped into people's life situations. The thematic material was drawn from the broader social process and discourse of "people's power" current in the early 1980s. The central characters in the first year book were part of an extended family in Tete province, one part of it living in a communal village and the other in a key industrial center. The rural side of the family included Paulo, a leader in a newly created communal village. He and his wife, Aida, and daughter, Mena, along with grandparents Daude and Lila were involved in activities like forming cooperatives, participating in literacy, organizing small-scale animal production, clean-up campaigns etc. all of which echoed the then current initiatives by the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education etc. Nuno, Paulo's brother, was a coal miner at Moatize, where he also taught literacy. His wife, Odete, was a health worker who had adventures travelling about the province with her colleagues. The discourse of socialist transition pointed to new and dynamic roles for the popular classes, with women and old people and peasants playing activist roles. The contents of the texts themselves promote new values such as collective rather than individual solutions, equality, popular participation and internationalism<sup>2</sup>.



The generic word or theme drawn out of each teaching unit was illustrated by a teaching picture, meant to generate lively dialogues and ready links with the workers' own lives and experiences. Not so, however, in practice. This too become almost a ritual.

*Teacher:* What do you see in the picture?

*Students:* We see people.

*Teacher:* How many people do you see?

*Student:* I see two men and a woman.

With luck, the dialogue would at least continue to identify what the people were doing. And indeed, conversations identifying people, objects and actions were useful enough for consolidating vocabulary and developing confidence in speaking ability. The step that never got made, however, was that of moving from identifying people and objects and actions to identifying life situations and problems, and from there, links to the workers' own lives. The one or two questions in the manual meant to serve as examples of the types of questions that could draw out these realities were rarely expanded, turning the dialogue into meaningless questions and answers, of little interest to students or teacher.

The way the teachers use the teaching pictures is enough to make me weep. When I think of our vision as we wrote the books, the care in selecting the unit themes, the notion of rich conversations, schooling really linked with the workers' actual life situations – and then observe day after day a kind of theatre where one plays teacher and the others play students, and they exchange meaningless questions and answers in a classroom ritual, all knowing that none of it has anything to do with their real lives and concerns!

Thinking more about it, what happened with the design for the first lesson says it all. The teaching picture for Lesson 1, which introduces greetings in Portuguese, was intended to establish the pattern of social communication in the literacy classroom. Our idea was that it should show a teacher and student warmly greeting each other at the door (no formal routine of entry here!). What came out, however, is something quite different. The image of the teacher at the door greeting the student is not front and center as we had conceived it. It has been relegated to the background. In the foreground is the image of schooling built up over years of colonial practices – the passive, receptive posture of the obedient student waiting for knowledge to descend. When I was in grade one in a small town in Manitoba, this was called "Position One!"

Lesson 1 shows the concept of schooling shared both by the literacy teachers and students – and captures perfectly the social construction of schooling. The design got past us as we wrote the books, probably

because we were under such enormous pressure to finish the first year book and get on with the book for second year. Also, as I recall, the designer herself was in the midst of a family crisis, desperately trying to get to Portugal, and we were intent on trying to get minimally acceptable designs for 104 lessons from her before she left!

(Field Notes March 14, 1986)

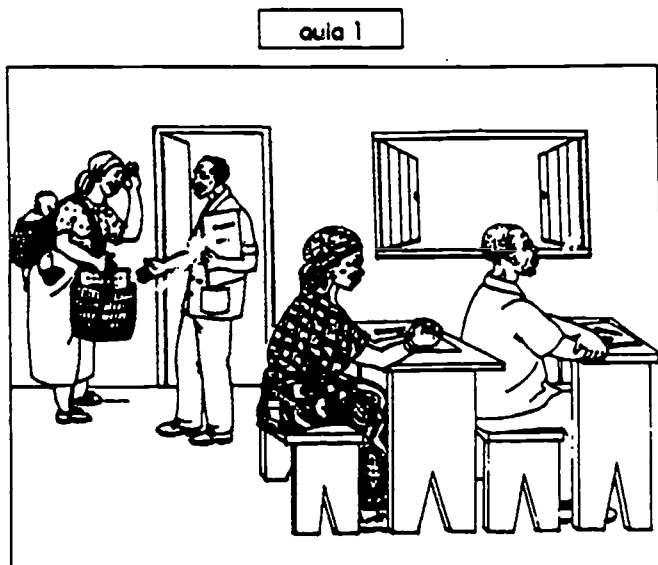


Figure 8: *Teaching Picture Lesson One*

Realistically, though, how could we have imagined the teachers would know how to interact differently, to cease being authority figures, guarantors of "THE ANSWER" when their own experiences of schooling clearly had been ones of transmission of knowledge always in extremely formal, vertical settings. What's more, the brief training programme for literacy teachers operated in just the same way. The content was teaching methods rather than some other discipline like history or geography, but the form reinforced all of the old stances. The style of interaction between the literacy instructor and the trainee was one of giving and receiving, active and passive, authority and powerlessness, bearer of knowledge and empty vessel. Nowhere had the

teachers encountered an educational setting where the students' ideas and experiences and voices were taken as central.

As we have seen above, there was a step in each lesson in which the students were called on to "discover" the new words they could make from the syllabic families already introduced. The teachers seemed to bypass this step systematically or else supply all the words themselves. The students were left believing they could only read the words they had already had. The irony, of course, was that the theme materials and suggested lesson plans begged for a different treatment, linking the classrooms to life, school with work. The theme materials all focussed on real life situations of ordinary working people, albeit far less besieged with war and hunger, far more gloriously on a path of socialist construction than the CIM workers. The suggested lesson plans included writing real letters, filling in real bureaucratic forms, reading the wall newspapers common in villages and workplaces. Nonetheless, the teachers assiduously avoided taking up these suggestions. Particularly in the first two years of the language programme, the teachers had the students repeat the reading texts in chorus until they were memorized, and then had them copy them verbatim several times in their exercise books.

There was virtually no encouragement of creative writing, and when the manual suggested it specifically, for example, in the unit on how to write letters, the teacher had the students copying the sample letter in the text rather than actually using new writing skills to write their own letters. To the degree that the curriculum materials pointed in concrete directions, the teachers seemed to take pains to keep the lessons at an abstract level, simulating the activity rather than actively trying to link the literacy classroom with day to day situations.

Only two people came to class today, and the teacher was sick. They're doing the teaching unit on letter writing and I felt a sense of elation that I would actually have a chance to work with a couple of them on writing real letters! Then Mondlane had to leave early. Cristina Mause stayed and probably assumed we wouldn't do anything. I went through the steps of the suggested lesson plan and arrived at the activity of writing a letter to a friend. It's actually there in the plan. Cristina forms letters easily now and more or less copes with sounding out words by syllables. She decided to write to her son in Xai Xai – and actually succeeded in writing a very good letter. Afterwards she was brimming with satisfaction. These things have to influence your attitude to literacy. She was almost dancing with happiness – ready to put it in an envelope and send it off to Xai Xai. I learned later from some of her friends that she had showed it around to everybody before she sent it.

(Field Notes, March 3, 1986)

The students themselves were aware of these circumscribed uses of their new language skills. When we finally did have a class assembly, their ideas about teaching methods included the possibility of writing things both on the blackboard and in their exercise books rather than just copying. It was by no means a plea to move into a phase of creative writing and more photo stories. The main idea seemed to be that they should write things so that the teacher could "correct" them. It did open the door, however, to less regulated communications.

#### Class Assembly

After several false starts, there was actually a class assembly in which the workers themselves got a chance to put forward their ideas about what was going on in literacy. Amazing how literacy silences the illiterate. Everybody talks about how to do literacy and the problems of literacy except the most vitally interested, the illiterates themselves.

The party and mass organization representatives were once again absent. Senora Leonor, the head of the party literacy committee did not attend. Sansao, the new teacher, took the initiative of having them work in four groups. The proposed agenda for the group discussion about literacy included:

1. participation
2. time-table
3. teaching methods
4. other items

With regard to participation, they identified the position of the section head as key. With encouragement from the section head, as was the case in the health post, it makes it easy for the worker to study. Once again there was a listing of problems related to work demands. When there are too many trucks to load, people from the Finished Products Warehouse don't come. When there are too many patients to attend, the person from the Health Post is absent. When a colleague has a day off or went on vacation, it becomes impossible to go to class.

There weren't too many ideas about teaching methods. In an exchange about things to read, it came out that the various post-cards I had taken such pains to send to the two classes during the four months we were in Brazil and Nicaragua had never gotten into the hands of the students. I didn't have the heart to pursue it and find whether they had stopped at the Social Services Department or in the teachers' room. Wherever they had stopped, the workers to whom they had been written had never seen them. So much for my efforts to stimulate interest in letters, and my strategy to keep up contact during my long absence so as not to break the momentum of building up trust etc! The workers did say

that they thought it useful to write things, both on the blackboard and in their exercise books, so that these things could later be corrected by the teacher. They thought that in this way they could learn something and that this method would give much greater results than simply copying phrases out of the literacy text.

(Field Notes April 10, 1986)

During the period of my research, I experimented with the use of other texts outside the classroom, introducing the publication of the Social Communications' Offices of the Ministry of Information. This was a monthly newspaper called *The Countryside* in simple Portuguese with a popular style including plenty of graphics. It included regular sections on health care, production techniques, basic knowledge etc. These were posted on bulletin boards in various sections of the factory where I had developed a good working relationship with the section head.

I went by the Finished Products Warehouse this morning to change the clippings display on the bulletin board at the entrance. Mr. Gouveia, the section head, really liked the idea of having something to read up on the board, and said that many people stopped to read them. I wonder if it's true – or is it said because it will please me.

(Field Notes February 2, 1986)

I suggested that the teachers might also like to put them up in the classrooms and arranged for a bulletin board to be mounted. What got posted on it, however, was the daily time-table and not the newspaper. Later the Social Services Department decided to get a subscription of 50 copies for CIM. The hardest task was to guard them for the literacy students, since the general dearth of reading matter made them a hot commodity, much desired by other CIM workers.

### *Knowledge and learning packages in "lessons"*

These regulated communications were packaged in the form of lessons. The new literacy materials had each day's work programmed for the teacher. There were teaching units on given themes broken down into lesson units with suggested plans for activities during the 90-120 minute classes. The first year language programme, for example, had 104 lessons.

These detailed lesson plans were included after much debate within the team of writers during 1982. The first literacy teachers' manual had included only general guidelines. Literacy monitors, usually with less than ten days of pre-service training, had shown little capacity to develop the theme materials

into teaching activities. On the other hand, step by step lesson plans were seen as too rigid, lending themselves to a very mechanical approach which could rob the teachers of whatever creativity they might have.

The classes observed at CIM underscored this danger, with the lesson plans taken with fairly rigid orthodoxy, a packaging of knowledge in daily doses that allowed no space for unregulated communication to enter. The "lesson" ritual began with the routine of putting up a "heading" every day on the blackboard for the students to copy into their exercise books. It was never clear where this ritual originated. It was certainly not suggested in the literacy manual but seems to have been accepted classroom procedure in the official schools and hence deemed appropriate for literacy. This meant copying from the blackboard into individual exercise books the date, the lesson number and whatever the literacy teacher could derive from the lesson as its title or content. Often in mathematics, the exercise book entry would be something like, "Maputo, March 12, 1986, Subtraction with borrowing". The math exercises were actually done in the math textbook, so often there was either nothing alongside the heading or only the rough figuring for the answers in the book, neither being very useful for future reference. Nonetheless, this routine of doing the heading was taken with utmost seriousness.

I found Eduardo giving directions at the beginning of the school year that only the heading, i.e. the date and topic were to be done with a pen. Anything else was to be written with a pencil, so that it could be erased. At the beginning of the year when there was a shortage of exercise books, the major consternation was about how to resolve the problem of the headings.

Eduardo came late for the math class, even though his sole task in the factory is to teach two and a half hours per day. Despite his late arrival, he has gone through the ritual of putting up the heading. Today it said:

Lesson Number 4

Summary, March 3, 1986

Subject: Mathematics

Conclusion of lesson 4 on natural numbers up to 100,000.

(Field notes, March 11, 1986)

What was interesting was the systematic deletion of all steps in the suggested lesson plan that took teachers out of a lecturing, authority role and involved active teaching methods and group work. Rote learning with drills using the pointer was the norm. Even the date and heading got drilled by individual students who came to the blackboard and had other students repeat the word indicated by the pointer.

*Ritualized questions and answers*

The regulation of communications in the classroom was also characterized by a ritualized form of questions and answers<sup>3</sup>. This ritual was part of a discursive practice that assumed the teacher as the authority who, in all situations, had the "right" answer. Knowledge was taken to be a given, something already possessed by the teacher and not by the students.

The questions and answers in the classroom were word games in which the student tried to guess the right answer, and the teacher played the students as you might play a fish on a line, giving positive encouragement for where the teacher wanted to take the interchange and not picking up on what was not of interest in arriving at a particular pre-defined answer.

In the classroom, this use of questions with a code of teacher's signals that guided students towards "THE RIGHT ANSWER" was not very deftly done. This was evident in the approach of the literacy teachers to the teaching pictures. The themes of the lessons, as indicated above, were derived from the day to day life of ordinary factory workers and rural producers at home and at work. They had been established through a consultative process with officials from various sectors including agriculture, housing and health. They included such themes as post-natal care, agricultural cooperatives, handling machines, women's participation in society etc.

These "discussions" in the hands of the inexperienced literacy teachers tended to be a series of closed questions, in which choruses of yes or no were the only response from the students. Given that those who ventured into a longer answer tended immediately to have their grammar or accent corrected in the interests of speaking properly, these discussions tended to be ones in which the only voice heard was that of the teacher. The students were effectively silenced.

Today Eduardo did, or better said, "gave" lesson 3 of the third year programme. He put up the inevitable heading on the board for the students to copy. Today it was:

Subject: Portuguese Lesson 3

Summary: Reading and interpretation of text

He then gave instructions about when to use pen and when to use pencil. Only headings, copies of passages and dictations can be written in pen. In the books themselves, where students write answers, only pencil can be used.

Then he "gave" the lesson about housing and various types of housing. To my surprise and consternation, all of the questions I answer part about round houses, square houses, houses of thatch and tile and houses of cement blocks and metal sheet roofs was slanted towards one



conclusion only. The conclusion was as follows. Houses from local materials are inferior, relevant for the era before the “discovery” of superior building materials; cement block houses with metal sheet roofs are the best.

I cringe. CIM sits right next to an idle cement factory. The bandits cut off the limestone quarries ages ago and there is no raw material for production so all construction depends on imported cement. Every worker in the classroom knows how impossible it is to get cement. What little is imported goes for high priority projects; individual housing is way down the list.

But even apart from the current cement crisis, the housing policy was never one of cement block construction for all. The National Housing Directorate has worked for ten years now to encourage improved construction methods with local materials, hiring cooperants to work in that area and winning fame at international gatherings for its enlightened and realistic approaches to improved rural and urban housing, developing local construction techniques and materials. Here in our very own literacy classroom is Eduardo as the authority on housing, telling the workers that cement and metal sheeting are really it.

(Field Notes February 25, 1986)

Another major inhibiting factor in the question and answer ritual was the excessive formality deemed to be appropriate by both teachers and students. All communication was through the teacher with no direct conversation from one student to another, and despite the small numbers in the classes (12-15), students normally stood up to address the teacher, or raised hands and were formally recognized by name before they spoke. The math programme introduced with the new curriculum materials in 1983 included oral drills at the beginning of each lesson to develop skills in mental arithmetic. The rapid-fire drills I remember from my own childhood, with the element of surprise keeping you on your toes, ready to respond to each question were very different from the formalities of “Mr. Joao. What’s  $5 \times 7$ ?” – after which Mr. Joao figured out the response to his question, stood up and gave it. The others, meanwhile, relaxed. While there were ritual laments from the teachers about wanting more class participation, they actively silenced the few who ventured forward with an input or observation outside the teacher’s game plan. Moments that could have been key for validation and empowerment were lost or turned into rejection and silencing instead.

The reading text for the lesson was short. The manual suggested asking each student to read alone. Eduardo read it first; any challenge of discovery automatically ruled out for the students. Some will now

memorize it rather than read it. They have difficulties with three words, "utilize", "resistant" and "technique". In Portuguese, technique is "técnica". But "técnica" is also the word for a female technician, as compared to "técnico", a male technician. Eduardo puts two of the difficult words/phrases on the board for the students to study – "técnica de construção" and "resistente". In the discussion, Celeste, the cleaner from the flour mill who is often outspoken, suggests that técnica de construção, in addition to meaning construction technique, also means a female technician. Eduardo does not pick up on this at all. He repeats that the correct meaning is "construction technique".

This may indeed be true in the context of the text under study, but as an opportunity to acknowledge new roles for women (CIM actually does have several women who are technicians and one of the four directors is a woman), to pick up on an unsolicited observation from a student, from a woman . . . the moments lost make me weep!!! If they were only opportunities lost, it would already be bad. But they are more than that. Celeste was actively silenced. Her observation was dropped, made invalid, denied the stamp of authority of "THE TEACHER". Will she be up for more observations in class in the future? Given her feisty personality, maybe she will be – but lots of other women won't risk it.

(Field notes February 25, 1986)

The manual for the language programme, particularly in the second year, included a great deal of work in small groups. The instruction in the teacher's manual was to divide the class into groups of four or five with a mix of stronger and weaker students in each. Many lessons included a period of time working in groups, discussing, preparing a reading passage or class presentation, solving problems. The teachers at CIM, and indeed elsewhere, systematically altered this instruction and carried out the activity with the entire class. They seemed determined to maintain control themselves. During the monitoring programme in the year the materials were introduced, I had often asked teachers why they didn't have the students work in groups as suggested. I got answers like, "It makes too much noise." "They'll teach each other errors." "It's uncontrolled." "I won't be able to correct them."

#### Lesson Observation

##### Lesson 22 Second Year Portuguese

- 19 present
- many replies in chorus
- reading done by rows, which are called groups
- instead of dividing into real working groups, the teacher directs all the work
- instead of each group's working out its own answer, the teacher keeps

control and gives them to understand that there is only one correct answer - much confusion between rows and groups. Leads me to believe they have never really worked in groups in this class.

(Field Notes May 6, 1984)

On the few occasions when work was really done in groups, the entire dynamic of the class shifted, with a totally different body language from the students, and a totally different quality of participation. This had already been very evident in work done with the first year students at CIM in 1984, when I was still working in the training department of the Adult Education Directorate and giving pedagogical support to various literacy centers.

We had seen that once the authority figure at the front of the classroom was removed, the workers began to interact with each other and visibly both relaxed and became somewhat animated. What was nice was how the connection of language and the world was immediately established. The high moral tone of the literacy texts, where everybody tended to be a model worker or peasant building socialism with few problems and gray areas, was left behind.

In addition to work in groups, the manual also suggested a variety of teaching-learning activities that were more active, and took the teacher out of an authority role. These seemed to be systematically left out.

June 12, 1985: teacher skipped over the game

June 17, 1985: Carlos jumped over the step of putting them to work in small groups to prepare a description of different provinces to present to the class

June 19, 1985: Carlos didn't bring the bottles to show how to divide a 10 litre bottle into 5 bottles of 2 litres

June 26, 1985: Aurelio, N'Guiraze and I chatted today about methods of teaching. We were left with the questions of why the active teaching methods are more or less systematically left out. Is it for lack of time, or because they don't have any conception of how to do them, and for that matter, why?

(Field Notes June 12, 17, 19, 26 1985)

Having seen this pattern during the first year the new materials were in use in 1983, we had already begun to introduce activities into the training programmes to familiarize the teachers with other methods. The geography unit, for example, included a quiz. The simple mechanism of writing out the questions and drawing them from a hat, with opposing teams having the chance to supply the correct answer and gain points instead of having the teacher maintain control both by determining the questions and supplying the

answers, immediately transformed the classroom. The trainees themselves got super excited at doing the quiz, so we added a few harder questions to make it more of a challenge for them, and let it serve as both a tool for method and a tool for content in the training course. I actually did this game with the CIM teachers – but the transfer back into the classroom did not happen. Active methods did not come easily. There was always a powerful tendency to revert back to formal lectures, with all in its place when the teacher was “giving” the lesson and the students were on receiver mode.

In large measure, the teachers probably did not know either how or why to use these more active methods, and feared the lack of control such activities engendered. The social construction of colonial schooling that turned on rote learning of the catechism in a context of formality and rigid discipline was still intact enough to make teaching methods that included fun highly suspect. Lack of time was probably just the pretext to cloak their fear of the unknown.

### *Classroom codes of authority and obedience*

The classroom as a space for regulated communications included coded signs of authority and obedience. The routines of entry and the formalities of being recognized to speak were two of the most obvious codes in operation. But in fact, the authority of the teacher was all-pervasive, dictating which book to open and when, when you could write in pencil and when in ink, who could speak and when, whether you could leave the classroom, etc. Far from seeing learning as individual or collective projects of the learners themselves, the teachers saw themselves as the ultimate authorities on all matters, in front of whom absolute obedience was to be expected.

The student-teacher interaction around the exercises in the textbooks was another point where this relation of authority and obedience operated. The language, math and natural science programmes included daily exercises – filling in blanks, matching words, copying, dictations, multiple choice questions and, in second and third year, short paragraphs. The math programme included both set exercises and a section of supplementary exercises for independent work. The students did these exercises in class time, with explanations from the teacher. Often the exercise was first explained and done on the board. When the students missed a class, the page remained blank. There was no encouragement for the student to catch up. Neither was there encouragement for the more apt students to do more. Once the exercises were done, the quicker students waited passively for collective corrections. Any initiative of the students to work ahead or write something in their exercise books was checked.

Many of the language exercises, particularly the comprehension questions in second and third year, had the potential for several answers. The teachers, however, discouraged a diversity of answers. Answers were given in the teacher's manual as an aid for inexperienced teachers, but these tended to reinforce the tendency to accept only one reply, and further reinforce the authority of the teacher as arbiter of "THE ANSWER".

The relations of authority and obedience were reinforced even more by the style of corrections. One of the clearest codes of authority intact from colonial days was the teacher, red pen in hand, judging the correctness of the students' work day by day. The literacy manual tried to suggest another approach for adults. It questioned whether a red slash or cross through errors and a correct sign for right answers was appropriate. This occasioned consternation from the volunteer teachers, for whom the role of arbiter of correctness was central to their definition of teacher.

It was suggested in the manual that the teacher give individual attention to the students as they did their exercises, walking from student to student as the exercises were being done. The meagerness of their training showed itself in their predilection for supplying the answers rather than probing where the error came from. They were also often extremely brusque in their manner, far more ready to pounce on errors than to commend correct work, thus reinforcing workers' views of themselves as incompetent and unable to learn. This often took the form of irony. Confronted with a correct exercise, the standard comment was along the lines of "See how simple that was". Faced with errors, there was little attempt to seek out the few correct answers for praise, tempering corrections with encouragement. The judgmental stance of the teacher led frequently to reinforcement of the students' sense of themselves as failures but both students and teachers seemed to accept the, at times almost dictatorial stance of the teacher, as entirely normal.

The class sessions observed gave ample opportunity to watch teachers not validating students' efforts. The repertoire for creating distance, silencing and putting students down was intact from the authoritarian classrooms of colonialism, expected from both sides.

Observation of Lesson 24, Third Year Portuguese

- 15 present
  - dialogue theme about donating blood
  - Pedro [the teacher] suggests those who don't have to give blood are "lucky"
  - Pedro asks for volunteers to read and two are forthcoming
  - both able to get through the passage without too many difficulties
- When they finish, Pedro gives his judgment – "NOT VERY GOOD!"

Pedro then has the whole class read together. Later Senhor Joao tries to read alone and has difficulties. Pedro makes him stop. Senhor Banze reads "I was" [estive] instead of "he was" [esteve]. Pedro makes him stop. Senhora Ana reads "I had" [tive] instead of "you were" [estiveste]. Pedro makes her stop. None of them has any idea what (s)he did wrong. Later people succeed in giving answers to several of the questions. The final comment from Pedro on the lesson is "You're doing badly". This is a crisis.

(Field Notes June 15, 1985)

Observation of Lesson 50, second Year Portuguese

- 7 present
- photostories done in 1984 distributed
- lots of spontaneous enthusiasm to get them and read
- Aurelio dampened this a little by suggesting they should read it for homework!

The photostories were just given out like that – at my insistence finally. To what end except individual pleasure, I'm not sure – though goodness knows a book just for pleasure is no bad thing. Senhor Santos can read it right through with no problems.

(Field Notes July 7, 1985)

Observation of Lesson 46, Second Year Portuguese

- 8 present
- Senhor Alexandre was concentrating so hard on the lesson, copying a text into his notebook, that he didn't even see Carlos, the teacher, approach him
- Senhor Amilcar took ages to write his name, "AMILCAR"
- Carlos' reaction when it was done was to say "Goodness – such handwriting. I really don't know. . ."
- Senhor Amilcar sits, all the tension gone out of his body, leaving only a deep weariness. The body language expresses frustration and defeat.

(Field Notes August 7, 1985)

The teachers' repertoire for encouragement and support, to begin to construct a new sense of self in the students as able, competent, articulate, with life experiences that are valuable and important, was just not there. But then how could it be? What experience had Carlos or Pedro ever had of a pedagogy that wasn't rigid, top-down, based on the transmission of knowledge. And it was all reinforced for them daily in their own night school classrooms.

I found myself torn between the students and the teachers. My feelings of sympathy for the teachers, knowing what their own experiences in the

classroom had been and how little the literacy teacher training programme had done to question such authoritarian styles, were real enough. They were usually far surpassed, however, by my outrage at what they did to the students.

#### Afternoon

Am I being bitchy or are they being impossible? After an excellent day yesterday, today is a misery. While at one level it was useful to sit observing this morning, at another level the whole thing was ridiculous. The rigidness is what really drives me bananas. Carlos this morning with incessant drilling on a word like artesanato [handicraft] that is hardly essential to the workers' day to day needs. He seems to have a special dislike for Senhor Alexandre so even what little he manages to do right is never praised.

This afternoon it's a session with just two students, Senhor Santos and Senhora Isabel. He romps through the text from the lesson, having been interrupted by Carlos from reading the photostory. She has difficulties reading the text, and gets harassed by both Santos and Carlos together.

Carlos is working with them on the difficult words. Senhora Isabel is not able to read them. Carlos chides her. "This is very bad. We can't have only Santos reading. Senhora Isabel is also here. She has to read too."

Then Senhor Santos gets in on the action. He also harasses her. She just gets more quiet still, and almost seems to grow smaller in front of our eyes as she withdraws into herself. Self-fulfilling prophecies fulfilled once again!

(Field Notes July 7, 1985)

The women students seemed to be particular targets of these put downs by the teachers. I observed an amazing scene in one of Pedro's third year Portuguese classes one day. He had given the students a test, meant to help them prepare for the real test at the end. The men all managed to do it fairly readily. Three of the women stayed on long after most had gone, trying to complete the answers. Pedro, who must be about six feet tall, came in and hovered over their desks impatiently at the end, demanding to know if they were finished. The women, looking somewhat defeated, said they were, and handed in the tests. Glancing over their papers, Pedro commented "Well, you've made a real fruit salad of it, haven't you". I could hardly believe my ears. So the two women left, confirmed in what they already knew about themselves and literacy – hopeless cases.

I was furious with Pedro today and the way he treated the women in the class over the exam. I caught up with him outside and told him in my



best national training staff authoritative manner that this was absolutely not the right way to work in literacy and to correct students. It's strange. Whenever women are put down, I find myself reacting very fiercely, with none of the qualms about whether I should intervene, and how. Anyway, intervention with Pedro to what avail? This one I just happened to overhear, but I imagine the use of authority to put people down in this way is common enough.

The problem is, Pedro himself doesn't believe they can learn. The notion of support and encouragement to tackle their shame and inhibitions is not his fix on how to be a teacher at all. He's the teacher. He gave it. They didn't get it. Clearly they are the problem.

(Field Notes June 16, 1985)

Throughout the period of my field work, there were regular discussions about how to link the classes with real life experiences of the workers and move them from being mini-lectures by the teachers, or ritualized questions and answers. Aurelio, the school director, was part of many of these discussions, and finally came to me one day to work out how we could enrich the second year lessons. The decision seemed to stem from the response by Abdul Carimo, Aurelio's director, to the study document. Carimo had included a comment to the effect that the teachers should break out of monotonous lesson routines and introduce new teaching methods like slides. Aurelio was now authorized to innovate.

We set up a time and then sat down and went through the units one by one, adding an additional activity to each unit. The unit on health care was to include a visit from health extension staff with their new video on diarrhea. The unit on tea production was to include real photos of Gurue tea plantation. The unit on colonialism was to include the wonderful photos from the CIM archives showing overweight, cigar-smoking settlers with their families at lavish parties in the dining room for white only, while the blacks who slaved with endless sacks of flour and maize meal ate from tin plates in a warehouse. The unit on people's power was to include a video on people's tribunals in urban Maputo. The unit on textile production was to include a visit to the neighbouring Texlom factory.

Aurelio seemed doubtful about whether it would all work. I tried to steer us towards manageable things. I also arranged to take him around to the Ministry of Health and the Social Communication Office from where we were to get newspaper subs for the students of a simple newspaper for newly literates. I calculated that by taking him on these rounds, he would be able to put faces to the people working in the various sectors. Once he had experienced their enthusiasm at the prospect of getting their resources out to places like CIM,

he would be more determined to make it work. I also tried to alert DNEA colleagues so that he might get some additional support from them. Subsequent letters, however, showed how hard it had proved to be.

We are in the implementation phase of those supplementary activities to enrich the teaching units. The visit to Texlom failed. The authorization from management was delayed in getting to me. I didn't receive it until after the date we should have gone.

(Letter from Aurelio Tembe, June 18, 1986)

The work with the Ministry of Health did not take place, although we made a lot of efforts for it to happen. On the day set for it after having organized everything, we were gathered with the literacy students from Petromoc (neighbouring factory) in the meeting room waiting for the Ministry of Health team. We at CIM did not have transport to go and pick them up at the last moment, and therefore nothing took place. I am really worried now and afraid to return to the Ministry of Health to explain how the problem of transport came up.

(Letter from Aurelio Tembe, October 13, 1986)

Breaking out of lecture routines was not easy, then. Nor was it always simple to interpret what happened when a different kind of activity was introduced into the classroom. Creating opportunities for the students to be something other than passive recipients turned some on but was highly threatening to others.

Today we did the activity with photographs to beef up the unit on tea production. We got photographs from the newspaper archives of the plantation at Gurue and passed them around to the small group of five who were present for the class. A couple of the designs in the book are actually based on these pictures, but clearly the photographs established these women and men picking at Gurue as part of the real world in a way that the illustrations hadn't done at all. Basically, the pictures triggered very different responses. Mondlane got super turned on. He started to speculate about how tea got introduced into Mozambique in the first place. He queried whether the tea worker really picked 45 kilos a day as the text said, and wondered how many baskets constituted 45 kilos. Mondlane himself spends his days handling 50 kilo sacks of flour.

In stark contrast, the two women were singularly passive. Henriqueta from the day care literally slept – and explained this in terms of working shifts until 7 o'clock. Celeste was in her usual stance of "I can't. I'm not able to." This, I have come to see, is not a statement in relation to a particular question, but a general posture in relation to all classroom activities. A question on day care centers on the tea plantation got through

Henriqueta's barriers – and suddenly a complete sentence, forgetting to be inhibited. What to conclude from it all? Hard to say.

(Field Notes, April 2, 1986)

I am still pondering the reaction of the two women. By chance I re-read Malina de Montis' account of their participatory research project in Nicaragua last night. (de Montis:1985) Some of it jumped out at me as the logical interpretation of yesterday. At a village called Régadio, a participatory research team working with the adult education department had carried out a project to try to see how to make the teaching materials more relevant to village needs and priorities. The local people had worked out a questionnaire and then community meetings had been held where a kind of resource inventory was made with identification of problems and possible development projects. de Montis spoke of how the villagers at Regadio had a tendency to complain of incapacitating headaches and shoulder or neck pains exactly at the moments of greatest analytical or reflective need in doing the research. Maybe that explains Henriqueta's response yesterday. It was really too much of a coincidence – the scene of intimacy with five people handling photographs and talking about them, and Henriqueta literally nodding out. Probably it did feel infinitely more threatening to her – an expectation of participation that was almost impossible to deny, given the intimacy of the situation. It was an invitation to have a voice and a form that made it hard to be anonymous and silent.

(Field Notes, April 3, 1986)

### *Whose knowledge and experience is valued?*

The classroom as a space for regulated communications also included practices that valued certain kinds of knowledge and experience and denigrated others. The most obvious form of this had to do with oral language skills. All of the workers brought to the classroom spoken competence in at least one, and in many cases several, Mozambican languages. Many could also read or write in their mother tongues. About a third of the students interviewed indicated an ability to read or write Changana or another Mozambican language. Many of them had learned to do so in mission schools or through links to the church. Others had learned while on contract in the mines in South Africa. This knowledge, however, was not seen as valuable. These were merely dialects, of no interest in the world of schooling, in practice banished from classroom use.

I had observed during 1983 that on the few occasions the students were encouraged to form new words from syllabic families, they had often thrown

in words that were not Portuguese. This usually occasioned nervous laughter. In situations in which I was part of the staff observing team, I tried to intervene and demonstrate ways to give positive feed-back, underscoring the validity of the word in another language, finding the Portuguese equivalent etc. I am fairly certain, however, that the teachers left to their own devices, did not feel secure enough to accept non-Portuguese words as legitimate.

The question of validating certain kinds of knowledge went well beyond questions of language, fundamental as these were. The basic life experiences and skills of the workers tended to be systematically denied as valuable by the classroom experience. This was at odds with the recent history of the factory itself. The abrupt pre-independence flight of Portuguese technicians from 1973-1976 had created a rupture in the hierarchies of power and knowledge, a sudden opening in which there emerged a radical discourse recognizing competence even when not accompanied by certified schooling. During the colonial era, there had been virtually no opportunities for black workers to become qualified. Many were highly skilled workers who had learned on the job, but had next to no formal schooling or professional training. Such workers during the transitional government and first years of independence were promoted to positions of responsibility, in recognition of their competence in keeping the factory running. Many were promoted to fill positions of management even as illiterates because they knew the work.

The professional training programmes for workers at CIM also put experience ahead of paper qualifications. When CIM did not have enough workers in the shops with fourth grade certificates to put into the training courses offered by the Ministry of Labour for welders, mechanics, carpenters etc., it set up its own internal training programme based on skills, waiving the formal qualifications for entry.

This dramatic shift of circumstances at independence had altered the parameters of the possible. Ordinary workers who had imagined only continuity in dreary routines of hard labour suddenly saw the possibilities of change. The intervention of the state in 1980 consolidated yet further this recognition of competence and knowledge through experience. The more highly trained Mozambican technicians brought in did not replace the veteran workers who had been made heads of the various sections of the factory.

Today I talked with the head of the mill, Domingos Chinguvo, who did third grade in colonial times and then did the exam at CIM to get his fourth grade standing in an accelerated course for cadres in 1982. He recounted how, when the settlers began to flee in 1973, he was named by the Portuguese engineer who stayed on as director to be in charge of

certain activities in the mill. Little by little, I mastered it – until I took charge of the whole mill. Today I have an engineer to give me support.

(Field Notes January 22, 1986)

As we saw earlier, an inquiry into literacy carried out by the Social Services Department in 1981/82 showed CIM workers at this time with high expectations of mobility within the factory. At that time they saw literacy as playing a role in making this possible. No worker interviewed in 1985/86 even hinted at expectations of becoming a section head. The situation had altered dramatically with the earlier space for mobility totally closed. In fact, literacy had become necessary just to hang on to your job and even sixth class guaranteed little in terms of improved work or wages.

The practices at CIM and those of the Ministry of Education were quite different with respect to paper credentials over against experience. Even in the first years of independence with such dramatic lacks of trained cadres, there had never been a move institutionally by the Ministry of Education to recognize mature students, or mix professional experience with formal studies as a basis for establishing equivalencies. On the contrary, the Ministry of Education had been quite rigid from the highest to the lowest levels. Even with regard to literacy itself, there was no stance of flexibility. There was no recognition that people might have learned sufficient reading and writing to pass the literacy exams in other settings, at home or in the community over the years, and that such people could be encouraged to do the exam and get the credential. The stance was quite the opposite. You not only had to register, but you also had to attend the classes in order to try the exam.

Not surprisingly, the general knowledge adults brought to the school was given even less recognition. The pre-service training programmes for the literacy teachers included some work on characterizing adult learners, differentiating them from children precisely by their store of empirical knowledge based on life experiences over the years. Once within the classroom setting, however, the teachers did nothing to signal either the existence of this knowledge or its value.

In the lessons observed in 1985, I found Carlos, the second year teacher, who had spent all his life in the city, assuming his authority role on all matters and giving mini-lectures on how to clear fields with the local slash and burn method. He was elaborating at length on this to workers, almost all of whom had rural experience and real tales of using such methods. The students could have given real accounts of fires that got out of control, feasts from animals caught because they were disturbed by the flames, children burned.

In another lesson I observed on child care, there was a step in the lesson in which the teacher was supposed to initiate a group discussion on local methods for controlling diarrhea. Carlos, who was only 22 and had no children, felt no qualms about acting as the authority on raising children to his students, most of whom were in their thirties and forties, many having raised six or eight children. On this occasion, one of the students intervened shyly and volunteered that in her district of Zavora, on the coast in Inhambane province, they used coconut milk to cure diarrhea. This was not picked up by Carlos.

What was interesting was that this took place at the very moment when new approaches to controlling diarrhea were being hotly debated in the health sector. There was a line arguing for community surveys and education programmes to discover, systematize and promote local methods such as rice water, coconut milk, or home made mixes of salt, sugar and water. Over against this was a line for putting most emphasis on dispensing packaged salts, urging concentration of efforts on guaranteeing production from the factory in Beira which produced them.

In effect, the literacy classroom pointed to the problem. The teachers were little convinced of the popular wisdom held by the students, and regularly interacted with them in a way that made them appear stupid and incompetent. The students themselves, on entering the classroom, left behind any sense of themselves as able, functioning adults with responsibilities in workplace, home and community. They readily assumed a posture of ignorance and passivity and defeat.

The sessions in the training programme on the psychology of the adult learner theorized about the wealth of popular wisdom possessed by workers and peasants and the need to take account of it in the teaching-learning process. The texts themselves were designed to draw on the life experiences of the workers. Often the lesson guide suggested asking the students to recount their own experiences – of everything from how the liberation war was fought to local dances, how to construct houses from local materials to popular medicines.

The teachers themselves, however, shared none of this vision of literacy, and the possibility of constructing rather than transmitting knowledge. When the lesson plan suggested a discussion or work in groups that would draw on the students own ideas and experiences, these were invariably jumped over completely, or developed only as far as the two or three sample questions of the manual. The responses from the teacher clearly signalled that this was a simulated discussion, and not one based on genuine interest in the students' experiences or genuine valuing of their ideas. Having picked up signals that



it was a classroom ritual and not a genuine exchange of information and ideas and experiences, the students had little to contribute.

There was only one occasion when I saw another dynamic at work. This was the occasion when Henrique N'Guiraze had substituted for Pedro Chivute and had succeeded in getting the whole group to speak in a very animated way about their experiences with treated and untreated seeds. At times the discussion got so animated that the students threw in contributions in Changanana, seemingly without even being aware which language was being spoken.

N'Guiraze managed to carry out in practice the process we had envisioned when we worked on the curriculum. It was a process of popular education, building on the life experiences of the students, constructing the moment to introduce the theory, systematizing more a reality that had been opened up by the students themselves. Problems had been posed rather than answers provided. There was a kind of joint creation of new knowledge rather than simple transmission of old.

One strong factor militating for transmission of knowledge as defined by the texts over against a process of creating knowledge based on the students experiences was the evaluation process for literacy. The sole measurements of literacy success were quantitative – attendance and marks on the final exam. A conversation with Carlos, the second year teacher who had recently done the six months training course for professional adult education teachers was telling. The oral part is a waste of time. What's on the exam is just reading and writing. For Carlos, the rote learning of the reading passages of the literacy textbooks was assumed to be the best preparation for the exams and so the classroom communications were rigidly limited to the prescribed texts. The notion that growing oral skills in the language in which you were learning to read and write might affect your progress seemingly had not entered his mind.

There were no measuring criteria for anything except attendance rate and exam scores. From the general director to visitors from the education ministry staff, the Frelimo Party to the shop floor boss, the only measurement of literacy success was bodies in the classroom and scores on the written exam. Since there was neither a language to identify nor forms to measure literacy's impact on job productivity, childcare, community participation, family communications, status of women etc., there was a strong tendency built into the programme to reduce it to what was going to be measured.

The exam, then was a powerful form in determining what knowledge and experience was valued and in shaping what went on in the literacy classrooms. Teaching to the exam was the norm. This became the more negative in that



the exams themselves were so unpredictable. The inexperienced literacy staff encountered major problems in setting, distributing and marking the exams.

Today the third year students finished the tests sent to them by the city education office, another set of "training tests". It was a total fiasco. Pedro invited me to have a look at the tests when they arrived, saying: "I'm afraid of these tests. I hope they won't be too difficult."

Duplicators, paper and ink were all in short supply so the tests were to be done from the blackboard. The idea of the city staff was to have the text written on the board for students to read, followed by fill in the blank comprehension questions. First, there wasn't enough blackboard space even for the text itself, never mind the questions. Then the students were told to copy the questions and fill in the blanks – which in effect was a huge additional copying exercise for new writers, using up all the time available. Instead of using one of the types of questions common throughout the written exercises in the third year programme, the test used a kind of matching question that allowed the students completely.

The Natural Science paper was even worse. It was hopelessly abstract. "What is nature?" "How would you define a substance?" So of course they all did very badly, all felt completely defeated, and all assumed that it was their fault.

Pedro's fear of the tests was well founded. For once we were in complete agreement. Or almost complete – because he also situates the problem as his students' limited ability whereas I see the main problem as one of a set of tests that were very badly set.

(Field Notes, July 8, 1985)

The methods of evaluating literacy success, then, played a powerful role in consolidating the value placed on certain kinds of knowledge and expertise, and making other kinds of knowledge and expertise entirely invisible. In practice, what the classroom experience and exams did, was to erase whatever knowledge and self-confidence the students had, as competent practitioners in their multiple worlds of work, home and community. Within the classroom, those areas of competence were invisible. When tested against the competence that the literacy programme was prepared to measure, most of the students became failures.

### *Literacy – a socio-political or administrative space*

Behind the forms of the school classroom and its peculiar organization of time and space was the set of inter-locking organizational hierarchies that made up the factory. There seemed to be a fundamental ambivalence about where to situate the school in the midst of these hierarchies. The operation of the school

was the responsibility of the Training Section, a section with a history of movement between the Human Resources Department and the Social Services Department. When I started the research in May 1985, the training section had been moved into the Human Resources Department. This department was concerned mainly with questions of work categories, control and discipline, combining questions of personnel policy, hiring, firing and transfers with those of absenteeism, punctuality, theft, damage, etc. It tended to deal in purely administrative methods. The Social Services Department, on the other hand, dealt with a number of social programmes that directly benefitted the workers and had historically had a dynamic staff, responsive to new needs and opting for persuasion and mobilization ahead of administrative fiat.

The ambivalence about where to locate the school and training section in the CIM organizational chart seemed to indicate the tension between literacy as a socio-political space and literacy as an administrative space. It had already shifted back and forth several times. The debates about where to house the training section surfaced once again with the appointment of a new head of the Department of Social Services.

Carimo [Director of Economy and Human Resources] says the training section has to go into the Social Services Department again. It seems to have been bouncing back and forth ever since I've been at CIM. Carimo says it needs to get out of the Human Resources Department because that department has control and discipline functions with entirely bureaucratic methods. The Social Services Department has a different stance, much closer to the pulse of the workers, much less bureaucratic. (Field Notes February 22, 1986)

Nonetheless, it seemed very difficult for CIM to discover ways of doing literacy that were not bureaucratic. The immediate post-independence era of frequent meetings and high energies for voluntary activities had long since gone. The practice by 1985 was not one of persuading workers to volunteer for literacy, either as students or teachers. The training sections had a listing of educational levels of all workers as part of its records and the school director simply pulled out the names of the students in each sector needing to complete adult basic education and posted them. Assignment to attend school was not unlike assignment of other duties in the factory.

The question of who participates in literacy and how is a staggering one. Zita informed me today that the Finished Products Warehouse says it can't send so many to literacy. It has too many work pressures. Literacy has to be outside of work hours. I know the newspaper, has been

publishing some complaints from CIM clients about long waits to load up their trucks with produce after doing the bureaucracy of requisition forms etc. So management gets pressured, both to increase production and to make time for literacy.

Aurelio tells me later that we're going to a meeting to talk to the workers in the Finished Products Warehouse. I'm full of curiosity as I've never been able to observe management in direct contact with workers about literacy – but I'm also wondering if I want to be identified with this scene. So we go to the Finished Products Warehouse office, and I meet a senior official I've never met before, plus the regular section head, Gouveia. Gouveia, once the more senior official appears, is marginal to the discussion.

The workers are called in. The man from outside the section doesn't know the workers by name, though many have been there more than 15 years. Several aren't present. They are on vacation – great planning for people who are supposed to be enrolled in the school.

The senior official goes through the list. Old people, i.e. more than 40 (sic!) are ruled out by definition. There is a semblance of a discussion of each case, but nothing remotely close to real joint decision-making. It is more concurrence with the slant already given by the senior official.

I keep pushing the discussion towards looking at each person in terms of what they've done – and manage to keep on the books a 42 year old man who has passed each year he has taken. I hope he makes it. At the end, he's the only worker still left in the room, and the two heads leave him standing as they complain about workers slacking off, leaving at ten for classes at eleven. I don't know – maybe they do. I guess I'd push it to the limit if I were there – there surely doesn't seem to be any semblance of workers' control at more meaningful levels – so why not push the system to the limit?

(Field Notes February 21, 1987)

The management discourse around participation focussed purely on individual motivation. It was assumed that drop outs and failure rates as straightforwardly lack of will. Moral harangues about attendance were seen as the antidotes, with administrative measures to back them up when necessary. There were no rewards for attendance at school, except the odd prize for a tiny handful of students with top marks. The punishments, however, were very severe.

Today Aurelio showed me the rough draft of a letter about administrative measures to be taken for unjustified absences. I guess the bureaucrat only has instruments for punishment and no instruments for mobilization. Now, according to this memo, people who have unjustified absences are

going to lose their rights to buy maize meal and bread and animal rations from the factory!

(Field Notes March 26, 1986)

Many punishments took the form of threat and were never put into practice. Indeed it would have been quite impossible to implement them without occasioning a major revolt from the workers. What is interesting, though, is the way that literacy administrators saw them as appropriate to propose. At one of the sugar plantations which I visited regularly in 1983, the school director had proposed to management that those who were consistently absent from literacy be thrown out of company housing. The newly appointed General Director, himself an educator, found himself in a position where he had to explain to his education staff that since literacy was a profoundly political action, it would be more appropriate to deal with it using political methods. He suggested a study to determine the real causes of drop-outs and some mobilization and persuasion rather than punishment. The result was a plan for kerosene lamps for night classes in the community, recognizing that cane cutters moving from field to field, hot and hungry after a shift of cutting, could not realistically down their tools and settle under a tree for two hours of literacy.

The question of why CIM workers participated or dropped out was by no means new nor by any means simple.

Luncheon Conversation with Angelica, Head of Social Services

Literacy is a huge problem. We've got workers who started with the Dynamizing Group back at independence. Then they did literacy in the first campaign [1978/9] – and the second and third. Some of them have been at it for ten years and still haven't succeeded. You can't force them to keep coming. Last year we had workers who left their sections to go to literacy classes and hid behind the buildings until the classes ended. Then they returned to their sections. It got to the point that you almost had to force people bodily. This year, we've just dropped first year. You can't bring people to literacy by force.

(Field Notes June 20, 1985)

Clearly the question went well beyond straightforward notions of individual motivation. The complex mixture of motivation and constraint, desire and fear engendered by literacy for each worker was rarely visible. The shop floor work process itself held out literacy as a path to training courses, promotions, and transfers to less back-breaking work. But life on the shop floor also made it virtually impossible to attend classes regularly without jeopardizing fellow-workers and production goals, leading at times to con-

flicts with shop floor bosses and internal struggles for power. And in fact, those who did succeed at literacy did not get the new placements and salary levels held out as an incentive.

The acute social problems engendered by the war and continued economic crisis were ritually mentioned as affecting literacy. What was little discussed was how women and men experienced the disjuncture between the CIM workplace with its systems of food, uniforms, transport and social services, not unlike the vision of model factories and development in the literacy texts, and their own lives at home and in the community where hunger and a rapacious black market were turning many Mozambicans into hustlers and thieves for a bar of soap or a pair of shoes.

The desirability of literacy for women was ritually affirmed. What was invisible was the cost and constraints – from old and still operative social learning about the inappropriateness for women to participate in public discourses to the bi-annual interruptions for child-bearing and daily demands of child-rearing so common amongst the women workers at CIM.

Still less was there a public discourse about opting against studying as a rational choice, the idea that men and women might calculate what possible benefits there were from education certificates, what value schooling had in resolving the immediate problems of their lives, and opt not to study as a rational choice. The implicit notions of illiterates as deficient, lacking not just reading and writing skills but judgment and wisdom, made it difficult to accept them as decision makers. Only the rare voice analyzed the possibility that mature, adult workers might make a conscious choice not to complete the primary programme for adults because it was not worth their while to do so.

A factor absolutely unnamed in all the discussions of the push/pull engendered by literacy was the possibility of an option against literacy as a silent protest (or even survival mechanism) against the ritual humiliation of the classroom. I happened on a few situations where women, in particular, were put in very embarrassing situation in the classroom, although none of the women put this humiliation into words in the interviews. I wondered about this when women in the Pasta Factory sent a mysterious message directed to me saying they did not want to continue studying. It crossed my mind that it might, for some of the older women there in particular, be based on the daily classroom experience of feeling threatened and then humiliated – at times not only by the male teachers but also by the male students. It was a message passed through many hands, however, and the possibility to probe deeper was made complicated by the response it got from the CIM bureaucracy.

**Pasta Factory**

Senhor Aurelio, Director of the School told me that Samu Gudo, Head of the Pasta Factory, had informed Senhor Manjate, Head of the Social Service Department that the women of the Pasta Factory want to inform Senhora Judith that they don't want to study anymore.

Senhor Mandlate told Senhor Aurelio to reply immediately that they have to put it in writing. The impulse seems always to have a justification for those who aren't studying and always to go for administrative methods.

(Field Notes February 25, 1986)

The jumps in interpretation of what was happening in literacy, between bureaucratic impulses and political impulses was a constant. In one conversation with Carimo, the Director of Economy and Human Resources, I was astonished at the rapidity of the switches.

I had an interesting conversation with Carimo today. He started with a very strong critique of education, suggesting that it was not really geared towards the workers but towards elites, a problem he saw as common in third world countries. He noted that the attention paid by the factory to workers' education and training was concentrated only at the level of secondary and tertiary education. This missed the needs of the great majority of the workers for adult basic education.

He was very critical of how workplaces organized education for workers, including CIM, and said at one point, We're very ready to demand things from the workers. But in terms of support, we're not there.

But then a sudden jump, and a lot of strong words about punishments and how to force workers to study. I am left baffled at the switch.

(Field Notes June 29, 1985)

The tensions between literacy as a political process and literacy as a bureaucratic process were, then, a constant. But how could it be otherwise, given that the power relations in the classroom, were so firmly embedded in the pyramidal hierarchy of the factory and its processes of power relations and communications.

## *Power differentiation in the CIM village*

When the settlers began to flee in 1973, I was named to take charge of certain activities in the Mill. Little by little I mastered it – until I took charge of the whole Mill. Today I have an engineer to give me support.

Domingos Chinguvo, Head, Mill  
Did third class in colonial schools  
Did fourth class at CIM

Sometimes something happens in the section and I think of alerting the head to it. But I keep quiet. For me, it's a problem – how to have the courage to speak up to the people in management. The head who blows up just makes me shut up. . . . It's very complicated. I know the directors here are interested in the workers, but it's really difficult to find the words in Portuguese.

Alexandre Mondlane, handler, 27 years,  
Finished Products Warehouse

There's a group – in the management, and in the political structures of the Party, OTM and OMM – that's already quite comfortable in its position. The people in it aren't very active these days. There is virtually no activity at the base.

Mario Chissano, operator, 37 years, Pasta Factory

The school classroom with its particular organization of time and space was firmly embedded in a set of inter-locking organizational hierarchies that constituted the social relations of the factory, and indeed beyond it, the larger society. Knowing or not knowing how to speak, read, write and count was a daily experience that structured the interactions, practices and choices of the worker-students on a day to day basis in their homes, communities and



workplaces. People brought to the literacy classroom their hopes, desires and fears of literacy, shaped by their particular location in society.

Literacy was by no means reducible to a set of language skills acquirable to all students, without need to take into account the social relations in which these skills were embedded and embodied as prevailing discursive practices. At CIM, as elsewhere, access to literacy was differentially experienced according to class, gender, race, ethnicity age, location etc. The social construction of subjectivities as female or male, black or white, working, employed, professional or employer included differentiated senses, of self as bearer of knowledge. People brought to literacy these socially constructed senses of self, defining themselves as legitimate participants in some public discursive practices – and ruling themselves out of others.

The very language chosen/imposed and the illiterate person's perception of access to/marginalization from particular practices as desirable/threatening was experienced from a determinate position within a set of power relations. Moreover, these knowledge/power relations were not specific to literacy but involved broader social and sexual relations. The literacy classroom, in other words, was firmly embedded in a set of social and political relations, ideological practices and symbolic meaning structures. (Corrigan:1987; Simon:1987; Lewis and Simon:1987; Rockhill:1987; Walsh:1987)

As we saw in Chapter 4, the prevailing public discourse on literacy by the 1980s had come to frame literacy as a commodity, with provision of literacy as a kind of investment in human capital, part of a larger package of rationalizing the workforce for maximum productivity. Literacy was treated as a composite of quantifiable knowledge and skills, that could be measured accurately and meaningfully on an exam. Illiterate people were perceived as having a deficiency. Literacy statistics were located in a developmentalist framework that assumed a direct, causal link between increased literacy and increased economic development.

There was an implicit assumption that the barriers to literacy had been irrevocably broken down with independence. The colonial regime had denied access to schooling to Mozambicans, while at the same time making all kinds of discursive practices out of bounds to Africans without the certified knowledge provided by schooling. The very language imposed by colonialism, Portuguese, had boundaries around it in terms of who could legitimately speak it, with a powerful discourse of cultural superiority. As we have seen in Chapter 3, the colonial state maintained a set of institutions and discourses of moral and social regulation to lock these boundaries into place. Thus a whole range of discursive practices was seen as beyond the capabilities of

black Mozambicans, with female black Mozambicans even more circumscribed.

Independence brought radical shifts in the discourse around knowledge and power. The nationalist discourse of the liberation struggle had challenged the colonial regime's cultural superiority profoundly and independence brought a dramatic shift in the parameters of the possible for ordinary Mozambicans. The extraordinary energy of popular participation in the 1975-1977 period had been triggered by this dramatic shift and at the same time created it. Ordinary Mozambican women and men suddenly saw themselves as participants in formerly out of bounds discursive practices, linked to the management of society at all levels. From street committees to committees of workers in control of abandoned factories, ordinary women and men, old and young, black, white, Asian and mulatto Mozambicans took on positions of responsibility. There was a radical break with the disposition of power and knowledge under colonialism. Suddenly positions of decision-making, action and authority were in the hands of those who had, in the old dispensation, been relegated to the margins. The call for participation in Dynamizing Groups and their ability to set up local structures of face-to-face democracy were key in all of this.

As we have seen above, this explosion of popular energies included an enormous desire for education. In many ways, it was the broader socio-political process in which both students and teachers were inserted that set the tone for the spontaneous literacy movement that emerged. New forms of education were set up as alternatives to the official schools, and these were closely linked with emerging forms of people's power.

By 1977, however, the radical egalitarianism of social and political relations that had characterized the immediate post-independence period had already begun to shift. The Dynamizing Groups were put on hold or phased out, replaced with a movement to build up a formal party structure instead. From the release of energies and creativity and "ownership" that had characterized the Dynamizing Groups at their best, making ordinary people feel in control of their own communities and workplaces, able to take initiatives to shape the new Mozambique, came a shift. Once again, ways of being and doing were being defined from the top.

A new "statist" discourse focussing on development emerged. The decade from 1980-1990 was designated as the decade to defeat underdevelopment. The new discourse on development seemed to signal a strong shift towards the state as the central agent of development rather than collectivities of people in their diverse forms of "people's power".

The New Year's message of President Samora Machel ushering in 1980 was on a very buoyant note, establishing a kind of "social contract" with the people for a decade in which victory over underdevelopment would be won. With the triumph of Robert Mugabe in the Zimbabwe elections and the prospect of peace for the first time since the beginning of the armed struggle in 1964, there was a vision of a decade of dramatic changes. It was a decade which was to result in establishing an abundant supply of good food, decent housing, clothing and footwear, the country developed agriculturally with heavy industry established, an end to illiteracy and unemployment, and everyone with access to health care and education.

By the end of 1980, the mood of buoyant optimism had already faded, replaced by rather somber tones. There was a steadily worsening foreign exchange crisis. The major political organizational offensive launched to wage war against the internal enemy highlighted many sectors not functioning well at all. The political and organizational offensive gave very mixed messages about centralism and democracy. While it came down hard on abuse of power, on illegality and on incompetence, and insisted on people's rights and on ordinary people as the ones to expose abuses of power, it also strongly buttressed the positions of directors and departments heads in commanding roles without a simultaneous strengthening of structures at the base to provide the constant check on new abuses of power. The mood to centralism, to work methods less through persuasion than administrative fiat, was strongly present and the worsening economy and sharply increased attacks from South African backed insurgents served only to exacerbate the tendency to centralize decision making<sup>1</sup>.

By the end of 1980, it was clear that the socio-economic process was limping badly. The 1980 Plan was filled in only two of its five major sectors and lengthy discussions were held in the People's Assembly about how to make it work more effectively.

In many cases one problem or shortcoming reinforces others and helps to create a negative cycle that will need several years to be broken. . . peasants and the family farming sector responded to calls by the authorities by increasing their production. At harvest time, however, there was not sufficient transport to take the products to be sold, and so production fell again. Following the Plan for 1981 is compulsory for all state, cooperative and private bodies included in it and measures will be taken against those who are responsible for failures to meet schedules and carry out tasks.

(Aim Bulletin No.54, 1980:6,7)

In all of this, a language of "must" and "compulsory" compliance emerged. The state appeared more and more as the main agent of development, with the role of the people more and more as passive executors of directives in a top-down chain of command.

The legitimacy of the state in articulating the goals of national development leads to a view of the state as the central agency in the realization of these goals – the capacity accorded the state as the central agency of development necessarily entails (and legitimates) its right to mobilize resources, to decide how they are allocated and used. A characteristic feature of statist discourses of development, in fact, is that these two aspects – the state's right to articulate the goals of national development and its capacity to pursue them – are inextricably linked. They become mutually confirming assumptions of a particular mode of defining development.

An elaborated definition of statist discourses of development thus comprises three closely associated assumptions or claims:

1. The legitimacy of the state in defining the goals of national development.
2. The expertise of the state (the rationality of its development strategies and plans, and modes of implementing them).
3. Control over resources in the pursuit of development justified ideologically by (1) and technically by (2).

(Bernstein and Corrigan:1984)

As Corrigan and Bernstein go on to point out, this statist discourse on development, with state as some sort of benevolent technocrat, displays state as employing certain kinds of expertise which it uses on behalf of the nation. The state, through its repertoire of development planning and administrative institutions thus appears as the collective "subject" of the development process – with the legitimate tasks of defining, planning and executing development tasks, while the beneficiaries of its policies (the rural poor, the illiterate, the working masses or even the nation as a whole) are the "object" of development. State becomes definer of the problems and strategies, regulator of social relations. People at the base are robbed of their role as agents of development, as in any way responsible for their own social life.

The mass media plays an important role in reinforcing this display of state as prime mover with daily banner headlines of cooperations agreements, projects, arrivals of delegations of planners, experts and technicians. What becomes operative is development as a textual accomplishment, the production goals and plan targets contrasting starkly with what people in their homes and communities experience in their daily lives. Far from experiencing the

"development" promised in the agreements and the plans, they endure growing shortages and hardships, against which they are powerless. Their ideas for solutions are rhetorically solicited; in fact they have very little power.

After 1980, then, a whole new discourse of "ten year plans" and "planning targets" came into vogue, a full-blown statist discourse on development. The main energies in literacy came to be focussed on planning targets – both for enrollment and passes. As we have seen above, the project of global educational reform adopted at the time fed into this same discourse, focussing on educated workers as the human capital necessary for higher productivity. From the radical egalitarianism of the first phase of independence came a new stress on hierarchies of power, and clear identification of seniority in decision-making processes throughout the society. While this was ostensibly done to tackle abuses of power and establish leadership accountability, the extreme formality and bureaucratization with which the leadership hierarchies surrounded themselves tended to have the effect of distancing people from the authorities, whether in party or state structures. New hierarchies of knowledge and power began to consolidate, with the great majority once again relegated to the margins.

The women and men at CIM, then, brought to the classroom particular desires and fears, hopes and constraints regarding literacy, shaped by their sense of locatedness in the emerging configurations of power and knowledge both within CIM and more broadly. For each, it was a complex interface of gendered, aged, raced and classed lives.

Meanwhile the prevailing discourses of socialist construction made these differences difficult for CIM workers to name. The Frelimo Party was committed to building equality in a non-racial society promoting the full participation of women. At times, however, the commitment to equality blurred the recognition of difference. There was little vocabulary with which people could name their daily interactions, practices and choices as shaped by power relations of subordination – of women by men, of black Mozambicans by white Mozambicans, of the old by the young (or vice versa), of workers by management, of less "sophisticated" northern ethnic groupings by more "sophisticated" southern ones.

With regard to race, for example, the old political work of the armed struggle days to discuss race, was long since gone. It had been characterized by open and frequent discussion about who the real enemy was, about the place of white Mozambican patriots who were genuinely anti-colonial, about the fact that black Mozambicans were not above complicity with the Portuguese, selling out their own people, was long since gone. Within the "developmentalist", "technicist", human capital discourses that came to

prevail, formal qualifications and expertise came to be valued more and more. Increased power came to be placed in the hands of "experts", which all too often meant precisely those who had had the opportunity to study in colonial times and were already relatively privileged. There was little public recognition of the raced and gendered construction of expertise, of who, historically, had had opportunity to study, to travel, to build up expertise. The commitment to a non-racial society seemed to rule out strategies of "affirmative action" which might have served to value the "expertise" as such while simultaneously asserting publicly that those who had not had the opportunity to gain it, because of race, gender or class, must now be given the opportunities to do so. In the absence of such discussions, more spaces were opened for murmurings and feelings of domination, particularly turning on race.

It is to the interface of these power relations and their effects on the experience of literacy that we now turn. The tensions between literacy as a linear, measurable, bureaucratic process and literacy as contexted and informed by political relations were a constant. But how could it be otherwise, given that the power relations in the classroom, were so firmly embedded and reproduced in the pyramidal hierarchy of the factory and its power processes.

Clearly I, as researcher, was attributed/took a place within these hierarchies. Once I started to do regular participant observation in the classes, I found myself in many dilemmas in terms of how to handle my own locatedness within the hierarchies of power at CIM. I felt strongly that forms like the entry ritual of the teacher were important in reproducing the power of the teacher over the students, and that this ritual was firmly embedded in all the interlocking hierarchies of power within CIM. Acceptance on my part of this practice could only be interpreted as acceptance and further consolidation of these power relations. On the other hand, failure to comply could be seen as a way of undermining the teacher's authority.

The CIM directorate, on my arrival, had immediately given me a desk in the Social Services Department, along with others from the training staff. They also incorporated me into the staff car-pool for senior staff, and the staff dining room for senior and middle management, plus heads of the party and mass organizations. I was somewhat uneasy about being put in this position and felt I needed to take actions that showed a different stance and a commitment to the lives and concerns of the workers. Clearly choosing not to adopt the ritual of formal entry was also a political statement of solidarity with the workers. Professionally, I felt that the establishment of this kind of formality and hierarchy in the literacy classroom was the antithesis of what needed to be created. While working on national staff, this had frequently been debated. My opinion had been further strengthened by the lengthy



discussions about these questions during the trip to Nicaragua and Brazil with the four Mozambican literacy instructors at the end of 1985. My decision about the appropriateness of challenging the entry ritual was in part tilted towards doing so by knowing that the four trainees were tackling these same questions in their experimental training center in Beira.

I therefore opted not to accept the established form of ritual entry. I tried to arrive before the first student, and used the time to chat informally with them about everything from what the bandits had done in their area the night before to how many beers each worker would get at the 5th Anniversary party. There were chats about children and a recurrent joke with Mondlane from the Finished Products Warehouse about how much I liked his red baseball hat, a cherished possession from his brother in South Africa. Once I began to do the longer interviews, there was much more substance to chat about with each one, and a recurrent commentary from different workers about Senora Judith as our "friend". (They were obviously monitoring these friendships very carefully, and those they perceived to be my special friends gave the speech and presented gifts to me at a party before I left.)

Is there a bit of a power struggle between Carlos and myself that I've been oblivious to? Maybe. If all year you have a sense of your own power by being THE TEACHER, then suddenly you are eclipsed by a visitor/foreigner/national staff person, it could be tricky. I like to come early to chat as a way of building up confidence, but I need to see that this totally sabotages routines already established of formality, entering, silence, writing down the day's lessons etc.

(Field Notes July 7, 1985)

This practice of consciously breaking out of the formal hierarchies displaying seniority and power was carried through in other settings also. Each walk from one part of the complex to another, each lunch break strolling to the dining hall and back, became an opportunity for brief interchanges with a variety of people from CIM that cut across all of the hierarchies already existent. On the days I drove the van that CUSO had provided for the national literacy office, I made a point of giving rides to those associated with the literacy programme. I also made a point of giving priority to the women, calling it the "women's van" and joking with the women about how women needed more places in this world where they got priority. This kind of bond with the women, the fact that the foreign, white researcher who drove a car (even though merely a woman herself!) really "saw" them and their lives and sought them out was a fundamental component of the research experience.



The regulated communications within the classroom and the power process within which the school was embedded shaped the experience of literacy profoundly, then, albeit not always visibly. It is to this question of literacy as a process to consolidate or challenge the interlocking sets of power hierarchies in the factory that we must now turn, analyzing more systematically the gendered, raced, aged and classed experience of schooling.

*"Mama only lets the boys study"*

Not knowing how to speak, read, write and count was a gendered experience. For the women in the literacy classes at CIM, whose ages ranged from 25-45, access to schooling for women was a new experience. Many of them brought to the literacy classroom as adults a childhood experience in the colonial era either of the classroom as out of bounds to girls or as a space in which boys were allowed to study while girls were channelled to other tasks deemed more appropriate to their sex.

As we have seen in Chapter 3, the regulation of sex and gender through schooling was an explicit aim of the missionary personnel and their auxiliaries to whom education of the indigenous was entrusted under the 1941 Missionary Statute. The aims of education included inculcation of work habits and skills for each sex.

What was interesting in the discussions with the women who grew up in this era was their matter of fact accounts of what this meant for their lives. All of the interviews included questions about the family history of education. Certainly an experience of exclusion from education based on gender was common to many. Colonial hardships notwithstanding, in most cases, their brothers had managed to get at least some primary schooling while their sisters generally did not.

Matilde Maboie was typical. She was a young woman of 30 working in the Pasta Factory as an unskilled labourer. She had begun at CIM when she was just 22 years old. Matilda had managed to complete second year at CIM as an adult in 1983 but was having trouble passing third year. She had missed many classes, however, coping with a four year old and year old twins, so one did not have to go far to figure out why it was hard for her to study. She explained why she was having to go to primary school as an adult while her two brothers had managed to do fifth and seventh class respectively.

In the colonial days, mama only let the boys study. Now I've done second year. Reading is not a problem. The problem is natural science.

(Interview with Matilde Maboie, February 3, 1986)

Albertina Carlos, a 42 year old who was part of the kitchen staff, also spoke of not having had the chance to study as a young girl. Her three brothers had reached third, fourth and sixth class, while she and her sister had had to begin their education as adults. Albertina had passed the literacy test with almost perfect scores in 1982. She had passed second class on a second try in 1984. When I met her in 1985, she was coping with a five year old, a two year old and an infant of two months. She had not tried the third year exam because of her pregnancy.

I didn't study as a child. My father wouldn't let me. I don't know why. ... In the colonial days, schooling wasn't for women. Go to school to do what? That's how it was seen.

(Interview with Albertina Carlos March 4, 1986)

A common theme from those who got to school was the disproportionate amount of time spent on doctrine and on activities other than studying. For the girls, tasks outside the classroom were even more common.

The girls who were sent to school were made to collect firewood and cultivate the fields. Only the boys were allowed to study. This was in the Santa Maria Mission.

Interview with Alicinda Macuacua, 22.07.85

38 years old, Pasta Factory, unskilled worker

One brother with fourth class; two sisters; illiterate

I went to school up to second class. There was a lot of doctrine and not much math and Portuguese at the Cambine Mission. There was also a lot of work growing maize, peanuts and cassava to buy school materials.

Interview with Clementina Oficio,

45 years old, Silos, unskilled worker

Enrolled in third year in 1985

I studied, but going to school in those days meant working in the fields. Afterwards I stayed home. Then I went to work to help out with the family.

Interview with Essinete Gabriel; 34 years,

Production Council, cleaner, Lost third year (pregnancy)

Two brothers with fourth and sixth class

I went to school as a child – just up to first class, then I quit. Schools in those days were just work in the field and cooking in the teacher's house. It was only work. Eh – in cashew harvest time – it meant staying in the bush, making local brew for the teacher.

Interview with Cristina Mavale, 42 years, Sacks Warehouse, unskilled worker

Passed literacy in 1983 and second year in 1985

Two brothers with third and sixth class

Two sisters with third and fourth class

The lack of access to the school classroom for women in colonial times was embedded in more global structures for silencing women. The patriarchal structures of traditional society relegated women to a position of complete subjugation. Part of the social content of the national liberation process was a profound questioning of these patriarchal structures, with the liberated areas as a testing ground for new forms of participation by women. These began with women's having voices in village level assemblies and resulted in significant presence of women in all structures. This included the military where women formed a Women's Detachment and proved effective mobilizers as new areas were entered. (Isaacman & Isaacman:1984; Urdang:1985)

In the first years of independence, women were included in the Dynamizing Group structures and the Mozambican Women's Organization, OMM, expanded dramatically. The fact of women finally having a public voice was a recurrent theme in OMM gatherings. The visit of writer, Stephanie Urdang, to talk with women in Gaza province in the late 1970s underscored this point.

We have talked a lot. We have related many stories. But I must talk about something we seem to have forgotten. We have forgotten to say that women had no voice. Where matters were being discussed, there were no women. Men said women could not think. But after we got our independence, this changed. FRELIMO says that all of us, women and men, can develop our minds, all of us can work. FRELIMO knows that women can think very well, that women are as capable of making decisions. A woman can be somebody. In the past days we never had a chance to have a hall full of women talking about our lives. But today we can be together from morning to night discussing our problems.

(Urdang 1985:350)

The post-independence upsurge of people's power brought to many women a new sense of self, a broadening of the parameters of possible ways of being and doing. They came to see themselves as legitimate and competent participants in discursive practices formerly perceived as out of bounds to women by a complex interface of patriarchal and colonial social regulation. Some of the CIM women seemed well and truly to have left the old inhibitions behind. Celeste Tembe, an energetic cleaner from the mill with a particularly brash style, seemed to be typical of this new generation. When I asked her why other women found it difficult to speak, she replied, "Many other women don't talk because they're embarrassed to try. What's there to be embarrassed about?" (Interview July 14, 1985) In the classroom, Celeste was always ready with a commentary or reply, at times to the discomfiture of the young men who taught.

Celeste had started to work in the factory in 1958. She had worked first in the assembly line making biscuits and later moved on to the mill as a cleaner. She seemed to take a real pride in her work, which included the seemingly endless task of sweeping up spilled maize meal. She explained that it was not thrown away but used as animal feed, and that workers at CIM could also buy it. She had started late in literacy because of shift work. She began in 1982, passed a year, failed a year, taken a year off with a new baby and then done second year, passing with an 80 percent average. Of the five of her eight children already in school, one had already reached third class, three had reached fifth class and one had done seventh class. Her husband, who worked in the neighbouring Cement Factory, had fifth class.

She said she had learned Portuguese under the old colonial bosses who spoke no Changana. She obviously felt at home with it, even to the extent of casual banter. I greeted her one day in passing, calling out, "How's everything over at the mill?" "Everything is normal", was her response. "What does "everything normal" mean?", I joked. She immediately shot back, "It means everything CLEAN!"

But for women, particularly those in the CIM school who were having trouble learning, the old shame and inhibition about speaking was still strong. There were constant reiterations of, "I can't speak Portuguese." "My head is too hard. Nothing enters it." Adelaide Mulengo from the Refectory found words to describe her own situation and that of colleagues similarly traumatized by the classroom process.

I like to study but nothing stays in my head. When I close the book, my head also closes. I don't think I'll go anymore. I'm just going to irritate the teacher. Not even a little bit stays with me – nothing enters. Going to the blackboard at the front, getting up to read – it's painful. The material enters a tiny bit but really not very much.

Interview with Adelaide Mulengo, 34 years, Refectory kitchen  
Repeating third year. Dropped out

At times in the classroom, when a turn for a questions or going to the board logically fell to one of the women most afflicted with shame, things reached a painful impasse. Short of physical coercion, nothing would persuade these women to try to give the answer. At times, this was handled gently by the teacher. There were other occasions when the teacher simply harassed the reluctant speaker. As indicated above, there were even occasions when the teacher was joined by the male power of another student!

The OMM at CIM tackled these questions with women from time to time. I was told that there had been meetings to discuss these "complexes" and to

encourage the women to speak up in Portuguese, but none took place during the time I did my research. Gilda was one of the few women in the Pasta Factory who had managed to do sixth class. She was now in charge of the stores office in the Pasta Factory, and had given some thought to ways to support women. It was Gilda who had helped out with the translation in the one interview where it was needed – and had done so in a way that really supported the woman being interviewed. Gilda said she now spoke only Portuguese with her colleagues, as a way of encouraging them to use Portuguese in situations outside of the classroom. She thought it was mainly a question of age, with the older women most locked into the old boundaries of silence.

It seemed, however, that old attitudes about women not speaking Portuguese and not speaking out in public were still in the air despite remarkable progress in altering the roles of women in society. Even in the relative sophistication of Maputo, the national capital, for women to speak in public, and especially to speak Portuguese, was seen as a novelty. Delfina Siteo, the competent and self-possessed attendant in the first aid post, spoke of experiences of speaking Portuguese in public and being ridiculed.

A woman who doesn't speak Portuguese well can make a mistake and everybody else starts laughing. For example, this can happen. Two women can be talking Portuguese together on a bus. The don't speak it perfectly. Other passengers who overhear them start to laugh. That's why we're ashamed to speak.

Interview with Delfina Siteo, 39 years, first aid post attendant  
Enrolled in third year at CIM  
Two brothers with fourth and sixth class  
Sister has done fourth class at CIM

It was very difficult to distinguish between silence resulting from genuine inability to speak and silence resulting from fear to speak. Also such distinctions were not necessarily useful since both inability and fear created equally definitive silences. Clearly the context of power relations played a determining role in whether women were silenced or found voices. And clearly the added factor of finding a voice in Portuguese rather than one's mother tongue compounded the problem immensely.

In my own research, I had anticipated needing interpretation in many of the interviews, but found that the same women who, in the power context of the classroom, could manage barely a word, had a good command of Portuguese for a one on one situation. I had sought out classroom activists for the first interviews, especially women, calculating that the first unstructured

interviews from which I was planning to devise an interview guide, should be with more articulate workers. In retrospect, I imagine the bush telegraph of the CIM village probably got the word out that the researcher was not a formidable lady and that the conversations with her were not to be feared.

One of the early interviews was with Atalia, a friend from the first weeks when the training section was still in the Human Resources Department. She was attached to the Sales Department next door where she worked as a cleaner. She also did light clerical work and had learned how to operate the telephone answering system. Atalia's energy and irreverence caught my interest immediately and there was a lot of mutual enjoyment of jokes in the department. She had started at CIM in 1973 and was a party member as well as being active in OMM. She had just passed third year but did not enroll in night school to do lower secondary. This was partly because she was taking care of her daughter's baby and had to take it home from day care each evening. It was also because she had done third year during a year with only some of the books and anticipated that she would fare badly in the next level. I partially agreed with her assessment and encouraged the teachers to think about a make-up programme for the handful of students in her position, but this never happened.

Atalia had many ideas when I asked her why she wanted to study. She had already learned how to read and write in Changana years earlier from her brothers and sisters. "It's better to have your own secrets. By reading and writing in Changana, you can avoid having your letters read by others." As for learning to read and write Portuguese, she had several thoughts, in an interesting mix of fact and fantasy.

I want to travel. Someday I want to make a trip. I could go to Tete. I have a brother-in-law there. But if I go there, and have to travel by plane, arrive and find a hotel, I'll need to be able to read and write.

You earn the same at CIM with or without literacy. Even with fifth or sixth class, you make the same. I have a friend who passed fourth class and she gets the same. But still it's worth it. Maybe in another company I could earn more. When people have an education, they don't suffer.

(Conversation with Atalia Macamo, June 21, 1985)

I asked Atalia for her ideas about why other women had such difficulties in learning and such shame about speaking Portuguese. She pointed to the distinction between public and private domains, and language use in each.

Some women really don't know how to speak Portuguese. Others are just embarrassed. As to why they have such complexes, how should I know? In my experience, women who don't work are especially afraid.

(Interview with Atalia Macamo July 17, 1985)

This interpretation was echoed by others, including some of the men. The distinction between not speaking and not speaking Portuguese was often blurred in these discussions. This was not surprising since none of the three relationships that accounted for the triple silencing of women – being women, being black and being workers – was clearly named and discussed.

Women have difficulties. Men get about. They travel to other places. They need to speak Portuguese. Women just stay at home. They don't travel. So that's why they don't talk.

Interview with Isac Cebola, handler  
28 years Finished Products Warehouse

Many of the interviews with the women underscored the circumscribed worlds and daily choices dictated to them by illiteracy. It was a world characterized by fear, with the desire for literacy clearly in part shaped by a yearning for more control over their day to day experiences in the home and community, and their belief that literacy somehow guaranteed this.

Cristina Mavale was a tall, quiet, slow-moving worker in the Sacks Warehouse who, to everyone's surprise including her own, passed the second year exam second time round with 80 percent. Her daughter was so pleased, she gave her mother a party to celebrate. Cristina also got prizes when the school year opened, including two coveted items, a pair of shoes and a capulana. Nonetheless, she had lots of difficulties keeping up with the third year programme. She later confided to me that two people in her warehouse, one man and one woman, had shunned her completely after she got her prizes, claiming that they had passed with equally high marks in earlier years and got nothing!

Cristina alluded to a world circumscribed by inhibitions for those without schooling. Her sense was that people who could speak and read and write could manage their social worlds at will, going anywhere, doing anything. She, like many others, spoke of fear in the world of the illiterate. There was fear of finding yourself in a military area, or at the wrong end of the city bus system or attacked by a fierce dog, for lack of ability to read signs. Clearly for many women, part of the desire for literacy was to feel more competent in the discursive practices of the urban world they now inhabited, far from the security of oral communications in their villages.

With literacy, people don't earn more but everything they know is in their heads. They can go anywhere, do anything, ask for things, enter in. When people don't know reading and writing, they are afraid. A person could arrive somewhere, read a sign saying "Entry prohibited" and know not



to enter the area. An illiterate person could wander into a military camp by mistake.

(Interview with Cristina Mavale March 20, 1986)

Laura Samuel, another worker in the Sacks Warehouse, also alluded to the multiple difficulties of day to day life, and the way choices got shaped by lack of reading and writing skills. She had very practical reasons for wanting to learn. At the core of her reasons, however, was a fundamental sense of powerlessness and dependency to control her life without literacy.

I really want to read and write. It's really necessary for me. When I go somewhere, there could be a sign saying "Beware of the dog". If I couldn't read, I could continue on and get bitten. I need to be able to go to the registry office and register the baby. Sometimes a stranger appears who isn't from around here and doesn't speak Changana. Without Portuguese, it's difficult. Also I'd like to be able to do things without asking for anybody's help.

(Interview with Laura Samuel February 9, 1986)

Clearly there was a lot of power attached to literacy. At times the sense of powerlessness as an illiterate facing the perils of the larger world seemed only a thinly veiled paradigm for the perils felt concerning immediate job security. Laurinda Zibia was the cleaner for the school. No day passed without a detailed account of her illnesses, part of a complicated history of pregnancy and health problems for her and her children. Her efforts in literacy were constantly interrupted by these illnesses, and even when she was well, she showed little anxiety to get to the classes. For Laurinda, a sense of powerlessness in the face of the larger world and the immediate world of employment at CIM seemed inextricably bound together.

If you're travelling on the road, you could die. Maybe a sign says, "Entry forbidden". You could enter and die. Enter where you can't go.

A person who enters now must know how to read and write. Now, if you don't know how to read, you don't enter here. Nowadays the question asked is, "Do you have ninth class?" If you don't, there's no work for you here.

People struggle to learn to read inside here.[CIM].

(Interview with Laurinda Zibia February 8, 1986)

Clearly literacy held out the hope of more control, moving more freely with street signs, bus signs, birth registrations, hospital forms. Celeste, the feisty cleaner in the mill, seemingly so full of confidence and certainly full of ready humour, confided her view of literacy one day.

When I know how to read and write well, I'm going to do a whole lot of things. I'm going to send letters to my children [one worked in Swaziland] telling them what mama needs. I'm going to write things for the office. I'm going to do a lot of things. Schooling is the way to become somebody!

(Interview with Celeste Tembe July 14, 1985)

For some of the younger women, the combination of employment and literacy had lead them out of the circumscribed world of fears and inhibitions to a much greater sense of control and power over their immediate situations. Serafina Alexander, one of the day care workers, started at CIM when she was 19, when her husband, a CIM worker, died. She had not studied as a child but began literacy at CIM in 1982. Despite the three children under the age of five produced in her new marriage, she had managed to get as far as third year by 1985. She missed the exam because of the birth of her youngest child.

Literacy makes a difference. Since I've come to Maputo, I've had to ask people for directions. Now, at work, my department head sends something for our signatures and I sign it. I can also sign receipts.

Once my husband sent me a note saying, "Meet me at the corner of July 24th Avenue and Lenin at four o'clock". No sooner said than done, off I went there to meet him. Afterwards, I was really pleased. This studying has its uses!

Interview with Serafina Alexander, 29 years, day care worker

For many women, one of the immediate constraints of illiteracy was a sense of inadequacy in mothering. Many stated very explicitly that the main reason for wanting to study was to be able to help their children. Marte Francisco was a 27 year old operator in the Pasta Factory who had started at CIM in 1979. She had gotten into literacy when the new management reorganized it in 1981/82. She passed third class in 1985. She said that in her work as such, there was little need for reading and writing. The work consisted of loading boxes of pasta and sewing up sacks. Instructions given in Portuguese were the only points she can remember when Portuguese was necessary.

The factory makes literacy obligatory but I also want to study. I need to know how to speak, read and write. At the hospital, it has been hard to explain my children's illnesses. We have visitors in the factory. They ask how many packets the pasta machines bags per hour. I don't know how to reply. With the children, I only speak Changana. If the children don't get places in school, they'll have to stay with their mother. Their mother is as dumb as an ox. They'll also be as dumb as oxen.

Interview with Marte Francisco, 27 years, Pasta Factory operator  
Started literacy in 1981, Passed third year in 1985

A number of women referred specifically to the importance of speaking Portuguese at home for their children's success in schooling. Luisa Antonio, a day care worker, put it this way. "I want the children to speak Portuguese at home. This makes them enter school with their heads already in good shape." (Interview, March 14, 1986) Luisa herself had passed first year but did not complete second year because of a pregnancy.

Her colleague in the day care center, Cristina Mause had the same idea. Cristina was 35 years old and had failed the second year exam. She could already manage better, however, claiming to know how to read the bus signs now and wanting to learn more so she could read letters. She was quite concerned about her children's schooling. "I have to speak Portuguese with the children to get them used to it." (Interview, March 1, 1986)

Manuel Gouveia, the veteran worker who was section head in the Finished Products Warehouse, mused on the question of women speaking Portuguese.

There are women here who say they don't know how to speak Portuguese. But at home, they insist that their children speak Portuguese. And who is doing the teaching? They are!

(Field Notes January 12, 1986)

If the practices and choices of the women were shaped by their global sense of a fearful world beyond the circumscribed space they could control, they were also shaped in very concrete ways by their reproductive functions. The fact of giving birth every two years made a claim on women's time and energy that left little for projects like literacy. In a group of 37 women interviewed, 22 had had at least one year of their studies interrupted because of pregnancy and/or maternity leave and/or illnesses of toddlers. Comments like these were commonplace. "I didn't get to do the exam. I lost a lot of classes. The baby was sick." "Last year I couldn't cope with literacy because of the baby." "I was pregnant last year – but this year I'm going to study."

The "First Discussion Document" took up this theme, suggesting that if women were going to be encouraged to have children and at the same time study, then clearly literacy for women workers would take at least twice as long as men. This theme was not picked up in any of the discussions, except to suggest more information on birth control. Indeed many of the interviews included discussion on methods of contraception emerging out of women's descriptions of their own families or of years of study lost because of child-rearing.

The structural constraints related to reproduction did not have to do only with childbirth and child-rearing. Full responsibility for the domestic sphere rested with the women. A double shift was the daily lot for almost all of them,

alleviated only partially by the extended family system and the CIM daycare center. The great strides of the Frelimo Party and the OMM in encouraging women into the public sphere and into the work force had not been matched by any initiatives to examine the work processes in the reproductive sphere and alleviate women from continuing with the full weight of responsibility for reproduction of the labour force, including both child-rearing and all household tasks.

Celeste Mujovo, a young woman of 29 who was a cleaner in the Accounting Department spoke of her double shift beginning before sunrise. The CIM bus picked her up at six in the morning. Before that she was up cooking, fetching water and washing clothes for her five children aged eleven, six, five, three and two. She worked until five and then returned home for a round of evening duties. This was typical.

Many like Amelia Cossa, the OMM activist in the Sacks Warehouse who had recently completed fourth class, found themselves experiencing a strange mixture of liberation along with constraints and classic forms of subjugation.

I'd like to enroll in fifth class. My problem is the time-table. I arrive back too late from classes to clean the house and feed the children.

Women are always squeezed. They are always in the middle – always ordered about. When you get home, you have to do this and you can't do that. A woman is someone always ordered about.

In colonial days, women did not have an active voice. They didn't have the right to speak in meetings, to discuss things at home. They were always waiting for someone to give them orders.

At CIM women now have voices. Now there's a head for the women. Women can be found in the various offices. Senhora Elsa is one of the directors. Senhora Leonor is a clerk in the Shops offices. There's a woman technician in the Electricity Department.

In 1981, there were two women who taught. One was very patient; the other wasn't. Men have more patience. When a sector is headed by a woman, it runs better.

(Interview with Amelia Cossa February 13, 1986)

Women, then, came to the process of literacy bringing with them an experience of daily interactions, practices and choices shaped by their ability to speak, read and write. This was a gendered experience. They brought a subjectivity shaped by a colonial and patriarchal baggage that circumscribed their sense of possible ways of being and doing. This had been challenged in important ways by new forms introduced with independence, but at other points it was firmly intact. We have looked above at some of the ways the silencing and discovery of voices were experienced most sharply as women;

in the mosaic of power relations in which the literacy students were integrated, literacy was also differentially experienced according to race and class.

*"For blacks, it's different"*

The occasions when explicit reference to race were made were few. The one very explicit occasion that came up was so stark and powerful, however, that it reinforced the sense I had that being black was an explanatory tool for many different levels of experience. The incident came up in the class assembly when, in an effort to encourage people about speaking Portuguese, I mistakenly likened my experiences in learning Portuguese as a second language with theirs. This happened at the end of the research project, with a climate of trust already firmly established. It was the ever alert Celeste who named the major difference between our experiences.

*Senhora Cristina:* Speaking Portuguese is a big problem for most of us.

*Senhora Judith:* But the best way to learn is to speak. It's all practice. Portuguese is not my mother tongue either. When I speak, I make lots of mistakes. Even now after many years. But I speak – and you understand me. We communicate – and that's what a language is for.

*Senhora Celeste:* But it's not the same thing for us. Senhora Judith can talk and make mistakes and nobody treats it as a joke. It's because you're white. When I speak and make mistakes, those who hear are amused. It's because I'm not white. For blacks, it's different.

(Field Notes April 10, 1986)

I was left pondering. How many occasions in the day to day lives of the black workers were interpreted with those words – For blacks, it's different? How many events in my own day to day life were actually shaped for me because of the power I enjoyed as being white, a power attributed to me and enjoyed by me, just because of the colour of my skin. How often did I assume that "that's how it is, that's how it works" – when actually it "is" and "worked" that way only for whites and not for blacks?

All of the black workers at CIM had grown up in the colonial era with its powerful regulation of race and ethnicity through the establishment of assimilated status and indigenous status, as we have seen above in Chapters 2 and 3. They had been shaped as subjects to see and sense themselves in particular ways and not to see and sense themselves in other ways.

If the social and political content of the national liberation struggle had radically challenged the position of women, it had been even more thorough in its challenge to subordination by race. With the establishment of the

FRELIMO government in power, black Mozambicans had assumed positions of power and begun to participate at all levels in the management of their economy and society. The commitment to a non-racial society meant integration of all structures right down to the social and sports clubs. At the same time, Mozambicans of Portuguese origin and Asian origin were urged to stay. Some of the top FRELIMO leaders were white. From the Council of Ministers to the local football club or block committee, Mozambicans of all racial and ethnic origins were to be found together.

The work on racism had tended to stop after independence, however, with the significant achievements on racism leading up to independence being captured in the capsule formula of now being a "non-racial" society. The heightened public awareness at independence of education and skill as having to do less with natural capacity than with historical opportunity dwindled, with the politics of a "non-racial" society seemingly precluding public naming of the historic advantages enjoyed by non-black Mozambicans which were such a significant factor in their present day roles. Nor did the commitment to constructing a "non-racial" society seem to allow any kind of affirmative action programme for black Mozambicans as new stresses on professional qualifications emerged. Race as a public explanatory category and as an area needing constant political work receded, while at the same time many people confided privately the view that racism was growing.

At CIM, this also took dramatic forms. As we have seen, the colonial era was one of white managers in privileged positions, enjoying the perks of office, from command of all sections of the huge complex to their own bar and dining room. Black workers were given few opportunities as skilled workers, no role in management and a warehouse with poor food for their meals. Even those who had learned on the job and had a thorough knowledge of the workings of their own sections were not recognized. In effect, these workers kept the factory running but without any formal acknowledgment of their roles. Officially they were invisible.

When the colonial glue came unstuck, all of this changed radically almost overnight. Black workers had long had the knowledge of how to run factories but no power. With the flight of the Portuguese, they suddenly found themselves in positions as department heads, or heads of entire production areas. A huge space opened and black Mozambicans were drawn into discursive practices, particularly around factory management, from which they had been totally excluded.

A decade later, the interface between class and race was more difficult to decipher. CIM, as all other Mozambican factories, reflected the racial composition of Mozambican society, with blacks, whites, Asians and Mozam-

bicans of mixed origin. At one level, this was taken as just another example of how a non-racial society can work. But CIM also reflected the tendencies throughout Mozambique to move from the radical egalitarianism of the first years of independence to more formalized power structures. So along with the pyramidal structure of factory management, each of the multiple institutions in the factory had its hierarchy duly recognized. This included the Frelimo Party itself, and the mass organizations for workers, women and youth. Each of them had its own power hierarchy firmly in place.

Even when top-down styles and abuses of power were not the intent, the general inexperience and habits of passivity coming out of centuries without any kind of people's power on the agenda made it hard for these structures to work. The Frelimo Party Secretary, Fénias Matsinhe, reported to the 5th Anniversary celebrations on the growth of the Party at CIM, not only in numerical terms but in capability to give leadership. He spoke of moving from a situation in 1980 where 75 percent of the members were illiterate to a situation today where only 18 of the 104 members had less than fourth class. He also spoke with pride of the fact that each member of the Party had a specific task within the ten working groups of the Party Cell. These included working groups for the wall newspaper outside the dining hall, for political study, for production questions and for adult education etc.

Certainly the working group for adult education was not working. The ever-irreverent Atalia had already commented on my meetings with its head, Leonor, saying, "What would she know? She's never put her foot in the classroom!" Indeed, as we have seen above, when pressed to act as a Party cadre in giving the workers an opportunity to reflect on literacy in a class assembly, Leonor had deferred to the school director. One wondered how many other Party structures were just there on paper with no actual meetings, work programmes, capacity to solve problems. And indeed, being there "only on paper" was relevant to the workings of the power relations in the factory, since having the titles and perks of office meant a formalization of yet another structure of power that left the ordinary worker outside, without access and without a voice.

The hierarchies of power were seemingly entirely unproblematic for the Party head at CIM. Even his comments about recruitment to the Party were solidly entrenched in a vertical order from the top down.

In the area of mobilization, hard work was done to select the best workers (most dedicated, disciplined and exemplary) to become candidates for Party membership. Since 1980, more than 40 comrades have come into the Party Cell, including: Directors, Engineers, Technicians, Skilled



Workers and youth with high school certificates, guaranteeing a continuity of party work in the enterprise.

(Matsinhe 1985:4)

Some workers voiced cynical comments about opportunism amongst those in middle and upper management who were prepared to admit privately they did not care about socialism or the Frelimo Party but were going to become members because that was the way to guarantee promotions.

Not surprisingly the hierarchies of power at CIM also reproduced in some important ways the racial hierarchies of the colonial era. Given that acquisitions of skill and expertise are themselves raced (and gendered) experiences, one had at CIM a management structure filled with those who had had most access to schooling in the past. A disproportionate number of them were both male and white Mozambicans. The general director was a white Mozambican who had had opportunity to study abroad. The three directors immediately under him included a black male industrial director, a white female chemical director and a male director of economy and human resources of Indian origin. All three were recent graduates of technical institutes. At the next echelon of power, there were four Mozambicans who were white or of mixed racial origin in a group of about twelve.

The placement of three directors who had graduated recently from technical institutes, along with other technicians with the same level of training placed in key sectors like the Mill and the Pasta Factory were part of the larger strategy of state intervention in which trained Mozambican cadres were allocated to CIM as a key industrial sector. Few were the industries with such a concentration of human resources. A strong management team had been created along with a set of working conditions and social benefits for the workers that had made CIM into a model of efficiency, productivity and sound management. The workers recognized this – and there were many comments acknowledging that the CIM directors had the workers' interests at heart. Yet if some of their commentaries are analyzed with care, they seem to have been as much silenced by the paternalistic benevolence of the new order as they had been by the crude abuses of power of the old.

One of the most moving depictions of workers struggling with fear and silence in the face of hierarchies of management was given by Alexandre Mondlane, a worker in the Finished Products Warehouse. Mondlane had worked at CIM since independence, entering when he was only 17. He was from Manjacaze district and had come to Maputo as a youth, learning Portuguese by working as a domestic. He had worked in shifts for many years in the Mill, filling and sewing up sacks of flour. When he was transferred to

the Finished Products Warehouse in 1984, he began to study. He passed first year in 1984, and after two tries, passed second year in 1986.

Those of us who grew up under colonialism had a bad time. We lost our mothers and our fathers; we had to look after the cattle. We had no time to go to school.

When you get into an enterprise with good conditions, you have to take advantage. We're here working at CIM but not all our section heads create conditions for us to study. Some say no. "When you go we're left short-handed. You can't go." There are others who force you to go – and later you see that it was a good thing.

When you begin to study, it's hard. You don't have any idea of the reason why. Later you begin to see and you're glad you were forced to go. It's good. If you go to another company, you can manage.

Look at me. I know Manjacaze and Maputo only. I'd like to go to Boane and Namaacha. My heart wants to go there. I'd like to go to see how they live, what they plant. But I'm afraid to go. How can I ask for directions, get information? With Portuguese, I'll be able to ask, to read the signs. Many trips we'd like to make are difficult because we can't read and write. Even conversations are sometimes difficult. We don't pronounce things well.

We may want to say what we think but since colonialism taught us not to speak up, that's it. We are afraid to speak out. We might say something wrong – and then everything would fall on our heads. It was better to stay silent. That was our experience.

When I worked as a domestic, it was the same thing. The lady taught me to speak Portuguese. She explained all the tasks of the house in Portuguese. She showed me how to cook, how to iron, how to water the garden, all in Portuguese, and I learned. She used to return home and ask if everything was alright. I always said yes. Something could have happened that day. For example, I could have had the bad luck to break a cup. But I would never tell her – because you never knew how she was going to react. Days later, she would discover it. Sometimes she reacted calmly, explaining that I needed to take more care, especially when the cup was soapy. Other times she blew up. You never knew. That's why I kept silent.

And it's the same thing here at CIM. You never know how the head is going to react. Sometimes there is something that happens in the sector and I think of alerting the head to it. But I keep quiet. For me, it's a problem. How to have the courage to speak up to the people in management. The head who blows up just makes me shut up. I'm just afraid. The fear remains.

When we workers are together, we're fine. Nobody is going to correct my error, say that's not how to pronounce it. When it's Por-

tuguese, it's different. If I am having difficulties at work, I have to figure out how to say it all in Portuguese. It's very complicated. I know the directors here are interested, but it's really difficult to find the words in Portuguese.

(Interview with Alexandre Mondlane June 12, 1985)

Although I did not set out to collect data for an in-depth understanding of the workings of race within and between these hierarchies, it seems appropriate to signal its importance in shaping subjectivities, and hence practices and choices. One is left with the question of how the disproportionate number of white Mozambicans in management structures acted on the situation. It seems reasonable to expect that a good deal of the colonial experience of regulation of social identity on racial lines was still operative, albeit not a matter for public discussion in a "non-racial society". The colonial experience of arbitrary power in the hands of white madams and bosses seemed to be an active reference point for Mondlane, even ten years after independence.

Certainly my own whiteness as a researcher in important ways limited the possibilities for black informants to speak readily about their feelings with regard to race. In the same way that the fact of my being a woman created immediate expectations of a commonality of experiences from the CIM women, presumably the fact of my not being black closed down spaces for sharing of common experiences of how the world got put together for people who were black. With the women, there were frequent comments, "Senhora Judith knows how it is, eh?" to preface commentaries and observations. Implicit was the assumption that we were both situated in some common space and experienced the world in some common ways by virtue of being women. It was hard to see how this interfaced with questions of class. There were no black women in management positions. One of the three directors was a white woman but she worked in the Candy Factory, where I spent very little time, and I had more contact with her off hours on the roof of the Swedish school where we both worked out than I did at CIM!

The sense of spaces closing down because of my being white was not experienced with anything like the intensity of spaces opening up because of being female. Small incidents, however, made me intensely aware that there was a constant process of locating oneself organized through race. One was the conversation with a young worker whom I happened to come across, standing with a group of friends waiting for the bus to go home, and wearing a favourite ear-ring I had lost earlier in the week. I started to explain that it was mine, but before the words were out of my mouth, I suddenly picked up from their faces that we were on dangerous terrain. I was the "white madam"

accusing the "black worker" of theft. It was a known situation, one in which they assumed total powerlessness – and totally arbitrary power in my hands because of my whiteness. They had constructed me as the white madam against whose claims there was no defence. I thought I read in their faces some mixture of anger and resentment, but also a profound resignation. That's how it is. That's how it works. For blacks, it's different.

The rapid explanation on my part that I knew he had found it somewhere on the grounds where it had dropped off and had had no way of knowing whose it was seemed to bring little change. I felt as if I had gone a little way towards deconstructing the stereotype when I proposed bringing him another ear-ring in return. I found him a few days later and exchanged them.

I happened to be giving a ride to a black engineer from the Mill when I came across the worker with my ear-ring – and felt as if the engineer thought me to be completely crazy in dealing with trivia like ear-ring exchanges with unskilled workers. I felt as if I could not reconstruct for him in words the intensity of the reactions I had felt in that group of workers, and their assumption of their own powerlessness over against a white madam's "accusation of theft". I offered no explanation on the way home, preferring at that moment to be constructed as foreign and eccentric.

It was a small interaction in itself. It made me realize again, however, how much being black, and situating oneself in terms of blackness or whiteness, was central to the sense-making repertoire for all of those working at CIM.

### *"Studying means staying in the same place"*

The hopes, fears and desires linked to literacy were not only shaped by gendered and raced experiences but also by experiences of class. CIM workers, along with all Mozambican workers, had experienced a radical opening of space a decade earlier. The convulsions of this immediate pre- and post-independence period brought about dramatic shifts in the power relations in each workplace. During these heady years, workers had been invited to participate actively in workers assemblies and forms of direct participation in decision-making. In some factories, the mass exodus of the settlers resulted in periods of direct worker control. In others, the management cooperated fully with the new Dynamizing Group structures and workers were drawn into rounds of meetings, rallies and voluntary work days. They had input into decision-making on all manner of policy questions formerly the prerogative of management, from technical innovations to annual plans and methods of discipline. (Sketchley:1985)

At CIM the continued presence of the old management after independence meant that the space for worker involvement was a contested space. The colonial management style had been anything but participatory. Women workers interviewed in 1980 by Stephanie Urdang recalled with horror their former working conditions.

The heads of the sections were Portuguese. We were not free to get on with our work, but were constantly overseen and criticized. The Portuguese woman who oversaw the Biscuit Factory would regularly beat the workers on any pretext. If a biscuit dropped onto the floor, she would beat the offender. If she called one of the workers and the worker didn't get to her quickly enough, she would hit her.

After 1969 the situation relaxed a little, maybe because of the war, one of the workers hypothesized. They felt they couldn't antagonize the Mozambicans too much.

(Urdang 1980:14)

After independence, as we have seen above, a few CIM workers made breathtaking leaps from the shop floor into positions of management. On the other hand, the administration cooperated very little with the Dynamizing Group structure and the period from 1975-1980 was one of intensive struggles for power between the Administration, the Production Council, the Dynamizing Group, and, after 1977, the newly created Frelimo Party Cell.

The report of the Party Secretary, Fenias Matsinhe, on the occasion of the 5th Anniversary of state intervention hints at the complex struggles that went on.

The former administration of CIM did not welcome the establishment of the Party Cell. It did everything to delimit its functions. Relations with the Party Cell and the Production Council at the time were very negative. Divisions and complexes of superiority and inferiority reigned freely. There was a spirit of lack of confidence and paternalism. The administration did not participate in the meetings with either the political or the organizational structures as a way of blocking the participation of these structures, and by extension, the workers, in the life of the factory.

These administrators feared the strength and the mobilization of the workers as well as their organizational forms. They showed a complete lack of interest in resolving the problems of the great majority of workers, limiting themselves to false promises and demagoguery. They also made clandestine promotions of some Mozambican workers.

These administrators, however, found themselves at times with no escape from the spirited demands of the workers. They abandoned the enterprise, only to be replaced by other administrators with new ideas...

At this time some workers, tendentially, organized themselves into a group called the Elders Group (Grupo de Madodas). They alleged that the party cell was not able to resolve the workers' problems. This group had as its sole objective a confrontation with the administration of the enterprise, forcing it to resolve the workers' problems, particularly the question of salaries.

(Matsinhe 1985:3)

Veronica Sumbane, a worker in the Social Services Department who had been a strong FRELIMO activist after 1975 and in 1979, had actually been the head of the newly created Party Cell, pointed clearly to the problems when interviewed by Stephanie Urdang in 1980<sup>2</sup>.

When the party secretary, Veronica Sumbane, talked about the problems, she gave voice to a sense of malaise. She spoke of the special difficulties that had emerged during the past year. Before, they used to have political education meetings, they read revolutionary magazines, and there were regular party meetings. "When I try to call a meeting the first question the workers ask is: 'Are you going to discuss what to do about the low salaries?' When I say no, they don't want to come."

The commitment to political education petered out, and brigades of the district's political structures seldom visited the factory any more. "They only come to know the problems", she said, "they don't come to solve them." They would listen, assure the workers they'd be back to iron them out and then not return. Even the acceptance of a woman's leadership of the party cell was not necessarily a sign of progress, she said. "The men had no reaction," she explained. "People are not deeply involved in party work just now. They are apathetic."

And OMM? Isn't there support for OMM among the women: No, Sumbane regretted. There was a secretary of OMM at the beginning, but she was appointed the Provincial Secretary for Maputo. The biggest complaint of the women is around the wages. They don't like the fact that they earn such a low wage and that it is less than the men. It really distresses them. So they keep asking OMM to look into it. Promises have been made. But they remained promises. "We are still asking and they are still studying. This is why the women don't support the OMM." She has troubles herself with the workers. Because she is the party leader they think she must be earning more than they. Sometimes on pay day they ask to see her receipt. "I show them. They can see than I earn the same as they do but there is still tension." The secretary of the Production Council had the same problem before he left for a training course in Cuba. He earned a little more – 3,500 meticaís per month – because he worked the machines. They were sure he was earning 8,000!

(Urdang 1980 15,16)



The scope of this study does not allow all of these struggles to be analyzed in detail, but clearly it was a period of much contestation and the question of salary demands during this period was paramount. The new FRELIMO government was faced with the need to take control of multiple enterprises already in precarious economic conditions trying to meet wage bills after the dizzying salary increases of the 1973-5 period. The departing Portuguese settlers had granted these increases as yet another sabotage tactic. On the other hand, the patient political work to explore with workers at what point wage demands become negative in relation to broader political projects was not easy to carry out in the contested space of the CIM power struggles during this period<sup>3</sup>.

These open struggles at CIM were resolved finally with the intervention by the state and the establishment of a team of some of the best managerial, administrative and technical resources that Mozambique had at its disposal. As we have seen in Chapter 5, the salary question was not resolved but a great deal of attention was paid to developing a much broadened benefits package. These were just a component of a much larger effort to take hold of the, by then, failing enterprise and get it back into good working order.

By 1985/86, a new order had been established, far removed from the open space a decade earlier in which such a dramatic shift in power relations had taken place. In this new order, the sense of mobility within the factory, the space for workers as workers to move into management positions or upgrade themselves in the workforce from drudgery and back-breaking labour to jobs as skilled workers or clerical workers had long since disappeared.

The new team of management, administrative and technical cadres was firmly in place at top and middle levels, with key sectors like the Mill and the Pasta Factory and the Administration headed jointly by veteran workers promoted in the early days and newly trained graduates of the Industrial and Commercial Institutes. There was a great deal of fluidity in personnel at middle levels, with many workers abandoning CIM for more lucrative positions in the private sector. Others, including technicians and skilled workers migrated (often illegally) to neighbouring Swaziland and South Africa. They went in quest of jobs that were more viable for their own and their family's survival amidst the ongoing war and economic crisis. At lower levels, many workers felt trapped and there were some real struggles for power for the positions available.

Alberto Sousa Moamba, a 40 year old worker in the Grounds Department put forcefully the feeling echoed in less eloquent ways by many workers.



I didn't study as a child. I took care of the cattle. The factory undervalues me but when I leave here, I could have some knowledge to take with me. I started out here carrying sacks. Then I was a driver's assistant. Later I trained for three months to be a fire fighter.

I requested work in another sector to learn a trade. In this "village", your sector is almost your prison. You're not able to get out of it. I want to transfer – but they won't let me, because there's no substitute for me. I work alone.

Interview with Alberto Sousa Moamba  
40 years Grounds Department firefighter

Moamba had started working in CIM in 1973. He had studied a bit during a contract in South Africa and did literacy in the early years. In 1985, he successfully passed from fifth to sixth class and was enrolled in sixth class when I met him. He had earned the same salary throughout this entire period.

I had not met him before and he treated the interview with unusual formality. When I asked as I usually did if he had any questions to put to me, he asked me to convey two inter-connected concerns to "those at the top". "People who come from outside with sixth class do well here at CIM and get more salary just because they come from outside." The other concern was a complaint. "I don't like the way they jump over people who do fifth and sixth grade in CIM. For example, in the Finished Products Warehouse. . . ."

Even some of the very young workers were resigned to staying in the same place and hence saw little value in studying.

Aurelio [school director] called me in the other day asking why I hadn't registered. He instructed me to enroll. But many of us have our doubts. At our age, what's more studying going to bring. We can go and study. But at my age, I'm not going to be moved from here again.

Interview with Afonso Chipente  
25 years Finished Products Warehouse handler

All knew that literacy was not a straightforward path to promotions and salary increases. And indeed factory management itself complained about this. The CIM management staff operated within a set of government wage policies that included a strict wage freeze. The ability to promote, to change categories recognizing more education and training, was blocked for management too.

The larger context of constraints notwithstanding, workers' experiences within the hierarchies of power in different sections of the factory varied tremendously. Some workers encountered support and encouragement to study while others were blocked. This led to much variation in how workers put together the question of schooling and work. Muchuchuane Antonio

Sambo, a labourer in the Mill simply said, "There's a conflict between work and school. You can't win them all. You lose schooling but you keep your job." (Interview March 19, 1986)

For a select few, schooling meshed with expanding parameters in their jobs; for most it was a dead end or even actively blocked. The success story of CIM in terms of young workers on the rise was Francisco Cossa, a 29 year old mechanical welder. Cossa had come to Maputo from Bilene district in 1968 at the age of twelve. He had become a car mechanic's apprentice and later worked for the city bus company for a time. He dreamed of working on machines so started at CIM in 1975 as a machine operator in the Candy Factory. He did fourth class at CIM and asked for a transfer to work in the Shops. In 1984, he successfully completed both fifth class and a professional course in mechanical welding. By 1986, he was doing seventh class at the CIM night school and working to sort out the bugs in the new equipment just installed in the industrial bakery. He had many insightful comments to make about schooling for workers at CIM.

There was a time when factories began to organize schools. It was a victory for us workers. At CIM, they organized all of this for us – good teachers and good conditions.

As an adult it's not easy. An adult has a lot of problems. You have to plan your life, to organize time to study and time to deal with your personal problems.

Lots of people drop out because of age. They also think they know all about their sector. "I already know my job – it's not worth it to study more."

In colonial days, going beyond third grade meant entering the road to assimilation. Many of us stopped.

I saw that I needed more – language, things in math like percentages. I saw that being a student was worth it. Fourth class brought a lot of new things into my life. But what most excited me was the course in mechanical welding. It was a really complicated course. I really needed sixth class to do it – but I passed. When you study, a lot of things open up to you. You feel like a new person. You're really free.

You have to make the future – and not think only of the present. My ambition is to be a technical engineer.

Interview with Francisco Cossa, 29 years  
Shops mechanical welder

Few workers had the mix of personal drive and sectoral support that Cossa did. As we have seen above, some workers trying to improve their positions through schooling found that the way was blocked by workers who had been

drawn into lower management positions as section heads. These workers perceived the rising education levels of their subordinates as direct threats to their own positions of power.

For the section heads too, the situation was extremely difficult. The war had disrupted their lives and put economic survival on the agenda in dramatic ways. Studying to hold at bay veteran workers who were making their way up the education ladder did not always fit in. Fernando Murrija, the 49 year old head of the wheat products loading section in the Finished Products Warehouse, had held this position since 1974. He was from Manhica, a rich farming district two hours north of Maputo, now full of "bandit" activity. The family plot in Manhica had always been a major source of food inputs for their city household and also extra income.

Murrija had passed fourth class in 1983, having failed on his first try in 1982. He enrolled in fifth class, but later dropped out, claiming a family death as reason to interrupt his studies. Later in the conversation, he warmed up to the subject and spoke of the real reasons he had rejected schooling.

My children can't survive on the salary I get. It's only raising animals that saves us. What's the use of my staying after hours to study when it's the pigs that guarantee my family's survival. I expect one of my sons to marry soon and I'll have to contribute to the marriage. With my salary, there's nothing to give.

My wife is in Manhica. I'm here alone. There is a lot of clothing available in Manhica in return for cashews. But there's nobody there to harvest the cashews. The district is almost empty. Everybody has fled to the city.

A lot of us began to raise animals when CIM sold its pig farm and offered pigs for sale at accessible prices. I get up at four. I have to fetch water, hay and food. I return at five in the afternoon to fetch water again.

(Interview with Fernando Murrija March 10, 1986)

Clearly, then, for contemporary CIM workers, there was little perception of a space for improving one's situation through education. The old expectations of schooling as a mechanism of upward mobility, providing the credential to get up and out of a situation – rural drudgery, urban sweat shops – no longer held. For the great majority of workers, there were no uses for speaking, reading and writing skills in the workplace itself. One handler from the Finished Products Warehouse, where workers spend their days heaving 50 kilo sacks, made this wry comment: "The study needed for that sector is just brute strength!"

The organizational structures for worker participation in the factory which might have drawn on new skills and knowledge were at a low ebb. In the early days of independence, with Dynamizing Group activities at their height in both workplace and community, there had been a need for women and men to know how to speak up in meetings, how to analyze and debate. There had been a vision of schooling linked to work place and community issues, a place to gain skills that could transform work places into places of innovation and participation and control by workers themselves.

In some factories, the first planning process involved the workers fully and necessitated not only a capacity to speak but also to read and to deal with figures. The participatory democracy in practice at the base created the occasions to put new literacy skills to immediate use. In the era of my research, however, there was very little life at the base in terms of workers' participation and control.

The Director General spoke frankly in his report on the 5th Anniversary of the strategy in taking over the management of CIM and the minimal functioning of structures at the base.

The main task that we confronted was to establish correct working relations with the Party Cells that existed then and the Production Councils. We needed these to allow us to define jointly the priority actions to be undertaken and how to mobilize the workers for them. . . .

To assure the authority of the new management in all sectors of work, it was imperative that middle management at the various levels take up roles as heads and learn how to transmit the directives of management to their subordinates. The practice of Management Collectives was the instrument used in this case although up to today it has been difficult for the lowest levels of the hierarchy to meet with the frequency desired.

(Almeida Matos 1985:3)

In fact, the collectives at the lowest level did not function at all. The workers had very little voice in the day to day running of the factory. As we have seen above, many reverted to silence rather than risk what was still experienced as the arbitrary power of a head. The fact that the collectives within each sector had ceased to meet, and that workers virtually never had the opportunity to talk directly with their section heads about work problems, work methods etc., left this arbitrary power of the head intact. There was no access except according to the individual temperament of each head.

There were few meetings with the workers, then, and those that did take place had little active participation from the workers. Few workers made any comment on their participation. According to some workers, they simply

"rubber stamped" decisions already taken at "the top". One worker spoke somewhat cynically about the populist style of the directors, even suggesting that it wasn't by chance that when they wanted worker agreement on a tough decision, they called on the popular industrial director, who was black, and had him conduct the meeting in Changana. This was seen as a strategy saved for decisions about which management expected some worker resistance, like the one to change the shifts from eight to twelve hours.

All meetings or activities or allocations of benefits further consolidated the existing hierarchies of power. Rank in the hierarchies was reproduced daily in the factory routines around everything from modes of transport to get to work to the number of loaves of bread carried home. It was a system operated openly, and senior staff quite publicly carried home the perks that they were allowed such as gas for their stoves, and a monthly quota of beer, both in short supply. In a situation of dramatic shortages of everything, this system was powerful indeed, and certainly everything that changed hands was duly noted.

While I was working at CIM, word came that there would be clothing available for purchase by workers in a number of key sectors. This type of distribution of scarce goods through workplace structures was one of the mechanisms for contending with the black market. The CIM workers were included in the distribution and were duly transported to the store where the clothing was on sale.

The workers were informed that they would be divided into three categories. The first category was comprised of directors and senior management, including senior official in the party and the workers', women's and youth organizations. The second category was that of full-time workers with no disciplinary actions against them. The third category was casual workers and full-time workers with some kind of disciplinary action on their record. Each category had the right to buy different items, roughly along the following lines. The first category got a suit, a pair of pants, two long sleeved shirts, shoes and underwear. The second category got a pair of pants, short-sleeved shirts, shoes and underwear. The third category got only short-sleeved shirts and underwear.

Once word got out, an angry rumour started around CIM that the CIM management itself had devised these categories and that the higher ups at CIM got extra pants rightfully belonging to the workers. In fact, the directive to divide into categories had not originated at CIM, but these kinds of distribution in which the top of the hierarchy got the best and the most were quite widespread by this time. In part, they served as a way of trying to hold on to senior managers and technicians. Educated Mozambicans by this time were

looking at other possibilities on the job market, especially from foreign companies and agencies paying in dollars, since this made purchases at the dollar shop a way of coping with family survival needs.

Whatever the reasons, distributions like this were a long way from the radical egalitarianism of the early days when such allocations were worked out on the basis of need. They obviously fed into a latent resentment amongst the workers. A few workers were openly critical.

There is a practice of always privileging more those who are already privileged. Everything there is goes first to the senior echelons and then to the base. Notions of working towards equality or guaranteeing resources first for those who most need them doesn't enter the game. It's simply, first to the structures, from the directors to the heads – and only at the last to the simple workers. There's a group – in the management, and in the political structures of the Party, OTM and OMM – that's already quite comfortable in its position. The people in it aren't very active these days. There is virtually no activity at the base.

Interview with Mario Chissano, 40 years Pasta Factory

Nor did the structures organized specifically to give workers an effective political instrument alleviate the problem. The newly created workers' organization, OTM, was meant to give the workers a means for voicing their concerns and demands, but rapidly established both work methods and an integration with management and party that simply added another structure to the already top heavy, top down power relations of the factory. Again the problems were ones that OTM senior staff saw clearly and spoke about frankly among themselves.

Mario Morais, a senior officer of the Ministry of Labour who was also a senior leader in OTM, pointed clearly to the problems during one of my first meetings with him at CIM. He was enthused about the presence of a researcher at CIM and pushed for some informal work sessions to learn from the CIM experience. His enthusiasm got only a bureaucratic reply from the junior OTM official from CIM at his side, whose only response was to commit himself to informing Mr. Secretary of OTM to name somebody to accompany her work. Morais reacted strongly to this failure to respond to what he saw as an opportunity for work sessions, outside of formal lines of authority. He situated it in what he referred to as Mozambique's error since 1975, that of "formalizing" and "putting everything into hierarchies".

Certainly the attempts to take up Morais' initiative and set up work sessions to explore a role for OTM in defending the workers' right to education came to nothing, as we have seen above. And indeed the replies of

the workers in the interviews to questions about membership in the Party and mass organization and what that entailed pointed clearly to the problems with the OTM and how little it was experienced as a voice for workers' concerns.

Yes I'm a member but I still haven't caught on to what it means.

(Interview with Augusto Maibasse, March 6, 1986)

Yes, but I still haven't received the card.

(Interview with Francisco Cuco, March 10, 1986)

Yes, I handed in the money and photo.

(Interview with Jaime Vilanculos, February 24, 1986)

A few workers had the idea that OTM existed to defend the workers but they were not very clear how.

I don't know what it is. In fact I asked what the trade union was. They said they'd have to explain.

For someone here, the OTM defends that person when something happens. For someone not in the trade union, it's straight to the street.

(Interview with Alexandre Jossias, March 4, 1986)

I don't really know how to respond. They said to us that we had to become members. Afterwards, we accepted. We are always paying dues month after month – and we have cards. For those who aren't members, if they have problems, there is nothing to resolve their problems. If there is a shortage of work, the trade union has to fight to guarantee employment. Even here, whoever is not a member of the trade union can only resolve problems directly with the management.

(Interview with Aurelie Malhusse, March 2, 1986)

The introduction of the OTM, then, as the workers' organization, did nothing to alleviate the situation of workers' dwindling participation at the base. Its most tangible impact on workers' lives seemed to be its bureaucratic form – photos, membership cards and dues. There was certainly no sense of a new space for workers to channel their problems and concerns about their work situation or social life.

Ordinary workers at CIM, then, brought hopes and fears to literacy shaped by their daily experiences of subordination to multiple hierarchies within CIM. The expectations of what literacy could do for their lives were influenced by the spaces opened up by literacy. The experiences of work mates who increased their skills and got school certificates, and the degree to which this increased schooling altered their positions in the relations of power within CIM was an important basis for establishing expectations of literacy. The



closing down again of the discursive practices around worker control of production and social conditions that had begun to open up after independence also narrowed the expectations of what literacy could bring.

As we have seen then, these expectations brought to the literacy classroom were based on gendered, raced and classed experiences of the power of literacy, in the home, community and workplace. Not knowing how to speak, read, write and count shaped interactions, practices and choices as workers within the hierarchies of power both at work and in the community. The experience of literacy at CIM thus takes on an importance beyond the confines of one factory since just as the "school" was embedded in the interlocking hierarchies of power and knowledge of the larger CIM complex, so CIM itself was embedded in a broader political project of socialist construction in Mozambique. The lives of the CIM workers and their experiences of literacy cannot be understood without seeing how CIM was shaped by, and shaped, the rough and uneven process of socialist construction during this period.

The experience of literacy at CIM picks up the tensions of two approaches to "popular democracy". A marked tendency emerged to reduce "popular democracy" to questions of access to schooling, contents of which transmit knowledge about ways of being and doing prescribed "top down". There is a much broader approach to popular democracy, however, that understands it as an educational process in which power relations are changing and collectivities of people producing and reproducing things – and ideas and people – also create new knowledge out of their own historical experiences and discover new communicative practices. Measured in terms of making education accessible to workers, CIM's activities in literacy over the years are an important accomplishment. Posed in the broader context of creating rather than transmitting knowledge, of encouraging working people develop a capacity to locate themselves in their times and space/places and legitimate their activities and inter-relatedness, the experience is fraught with contradictions. It points us to some of the most vexing problems of socialist construction.

## CHAPTER 9

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# *New beginnings*

... socialist construction gives the masses their heads; whereas capitalism uses ideally headless pure labour power. ... Socialist construction, by giving the masses their heads, immediately unleashes an enormous productive force; the collective skills and energies of workers and peasants are the major productive forces of socialist construction. What socialist construction should also make possible is the actualisation of the dreams... the aspirations and hopes of the masses.

These too are real resources for socialism. Not machines, not money, not technology, not cadres, and not, perhaps above all not, state bureaucrats, but the working masses in their production collectivities are the people who make socialist construction.

(Corrigan and Sayer 1984:48)

I've worked in literacy and adult education since 1981. The beginning of the Manga project [1985] marks the beginning of a new phase for me. In the first phase, we received programmes. We received directives vertically, how we had to do this or that. We were simply executors of programmes from the top. We took on those programmes without any knowledge of the reality of the regions. The literacy teachers and adult education teachers we trained went there to reproduce the programmes. Many times, we knew it wouldn't produce any results.

In this second phase, we have improved a lot. We are capable of doing a training course. We are able to carry out a community study. Now we know how to do a training programme. First we study the actual situation, we identify the lacunas and we develop a programme.

Difficult as it may be, we're the ones who are doing it. Pedagogically, we are the ones responsible for it. We're autonomous. It's us – both for the successes and the failures.

(Interview with Domingos Chigarire  
Staff Trainer, Manga Pilot Project)

The experience of literacy in Mozambique over the years has been characterized by strikingly different moments. Within and between these moments, however, has been a common thread, a recurrent tension between moments of popular control in which those being educated play central roles in defining their own educational project over against moments when state or party structures substituted for the people, establishing an education project based on top-down directives of educators, administrators, planners and other "experts".

Certainly literacy as it took form in the space opened by the coup in Portugal in 1974 was integrally linked with a movement to establish people's power. It was a moment of strong community control, within a process of conscious action/active consciousness based on the energies of ordinary people. Women and men throughout Mozambique were "given their heads" after centuries of colonial humiliation. A space opened in which the collective skills and energies of ordinary people could be channelled into assuming responsibility for their own social life, taking initiatives to create their own day to day development. The richness, diversity and high energy of this broad spontaneous movement around 1975 contrasts greatly with later experiences of literacy.

In Mozambique as in any other country embarking on a project of socialist reconstruction, the path has proven to be both jagged and uneven, marked by advances and retreats and holds. This is so for many reasons. An important and not always named one is that Mozambique, like any other country setting out on a socialist path, did not start from some sort of *tabula rasa*. It was located in the real historical world, in a real geo-political time and space that both created possibilities and dictated constraints. In Mozambique's case, the geo-political reality was that of firm and long-standing integration into the regional economy of southern Africa, with its social organization of racial capitalism and its domination by the powerful apartheid state of South Africa. Integration into such a regional economy clearly meant that Mozambique's efforts to redirect its resources for the benefit of its own people and to challenge the use of racial categories in the organization of production brought an immediate counter-attack.

This has meant a project of constructing socialism under siege. There have been concerted and expanding actions to prevent Mozambique from advancing on its socialist option, first organized from Rhodesia, and in 1980, with the creation of Zimbabwe, from South Africa. The systematic campaign of low intensity warfare only faintly discernible in the first two years after independence was already clearer by mid-1977. In international forums such as the United Nations and the Non-aligned Movement, Mozambique alerted

the world to the heightening regional tensions. Internally, a booklet entitled *How the Enemy Acts. A Political Analysis of the Socio-economic Situation of the Country* (Frelimo:1977) was widely circulated.

We are witnessing the putting into operation of a vast plan which corresponds to the current tactics of imperialism against the people's governments. . . It is a combination of aggression, subversion, economic sabotage and general destabilisation. [The aim is] to affect the living conditions of the masses, create problems of supplies, fundamentally to create discontentment on a broad level.

(Quoted in Egero 1987:75)

Over the next few years these pressures increased greatly, although their origins remained somewhat blurred. In part because of Mozambique's complicated multiple dependencies and in part out of a desire not to provoke South Africa unnecessarily by signalling its role, a clear definition and characterization of the source of the destabilizing was slow in emerging. Not for Mozambique the clarity of a Nicaragua, with President Reagan as a self-avowed contra. That difference notwithstanding, the systematic actions pitted against Mozambique were not unlike the low intensity warfare being carried out against Nicaragua.

LIW [low intensity warfare] seeks first to crack the logic of the revolution, deciphering its internal cohesion and understanding the tactics it employs to advance its interests, and then to devise a strategy that will warp this logic, undoing its internal cohesion and rendering its tactics ineffective – in short turning the revolution against itself. LIW is extremely flexible; its tactics are made to suit the conditions of each conflict. . . . The war against Nicaragua is thus aimed at delegitimizing, isolating, and suffocating the Revolution to the point where it is no longer considered a viable political alternative in the eyes of the population. At the same time, an attempt is made to legitimate and stabilize the counter-revolutionary alternative to revolution.

(Robinson and Norsworthy 1985:15,16)

Mozambique was forced increasingly, then, onto the defensive. It had to contend on a daily basis with a combination of outright attacks from South African Defence Forces, widespread terrorist actions in every province from South Africa's surrogate force, RENAMO, economic sabotage and destabilization and a disinformation campaign designed to frame the issue both in the region and internationally as an east-west conflict.

The construction of socialism under siege is not the only reason for a jagged and uneven path. A post-revolutionary social formation like that of

Mozambique is one where capitalist forces have been deprived of their monopoly of the means of production and labour power has ceased to be purely a commodity. In addition, however, to the significant sectors in Mozambique where production in capitalist forms continued intact, there was also a continuation of the capitalist ethos throughout the society. Capitalism, after all, is not just a mode of production but a mode of "life". There are extensive productive, moral, cultural and habitual bases of power of the former ruling classes that remain to be transformed in any transitional process. Neither the forces of production (narrowly conceived) or the purely legal forms of property control can be separated from the richly variegated texture of political, cultural and other social relations which made that capitalist production possible. And this texture is the more complex still to transform where the consolidation of capitalist forms was only partial.

The struggle between capitalism and socialism was not assured by the simple fact of revolution, however much the victory after ten years of armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism seemed to indicate that it might be, in the early days. Transition is always a two way street and a regression to some variant of capitalist forms is as real a possibility as consolidation along a socialist path. In any case, the lessons from historical reconstruction of the transition from feudalism to capitalism indicate a process measured not in decades but in centuries, with a jagged and uneven path within and between social formation at every point along the way<sup>1</sup>.

Certainly in Mozambique, the years since independence have been a time of struggles – between opposing lines, opposing classes and all in the context of external attack and profound internal weaknesses related to underdevelopment. It has also been a time of necessary errors and mistakes. Here some of the reflections on other experiences of socialist construction take on resonance.

Being "good at learning" is a paramount necessity for socialist construction during which the whole social formation, including all the individuals within it, will be marked by struggles. . . . It is part, and a central part, of Mao's immense theoretical revolution to have recognised the centrality of this and the *necessity* of errors and mistakes. This follows from his correct emphasis that correct ideas come from social practice. As Mao wrote in 1968: "Mistakes will inevitably be committed. It is impossible not to commit them. The commission of mistakes is a necessary condition for the formation of a correct line. . . . The correct line is formed in the struggle with the incorrect line. To say that mistakes can all be avoided, so that there are only correct things, and no mistakes, is an anti-Marxist proposition. . . . It is metaphysical."

(Corrigan & Sayer 1984:140)

A key aspect has been the pervasiveness of the capitalist/colonialist culture which is diametrically opposed to "people's power" and works to distance people from initiatives for popular control. The very categories of thought, sense of human capacity and experiences of social forms in Mozambique have all been permeated by the social relations of productive forces specific to capitalism, and have to be deconstructed by all, including the leaders! Intrinsic to capitalism is a deep distrust of popular initiatives and energies and hence the need for "experts", for doctors, architects, lawyers – and teachers.

It is this reality that prompted Samora Machel to speak on independence day of inheriting a colonial state whose apparatus was "in its nature, composition and methods, a profoundly retrograde and reactionary structure which has to be completely revolutionized in order to be put at the service of the masses." (Machel:1975) An interview given a year later included reflections on this process of establishing "people's power". A central question was the difficulty of finding "expertise" and "technical competence" which was not coupled with the profound distrust of popular solutions so central to the capitalist ethos in which that "expertise" or "technical competence" was acquired.

There are maneuvers of the local bourgeoisie which have already failed. Thus, some of that group had thought that after the takeover of power, and after a period of time had elapsed, FRELIMO would have a great need for qualified personnel and that it would be among the "evolues" [those that had evolved] that we would be obliged to look for such personnel. They thought in this way to lay hold of the state apparatus and to block or distort our projects.

But we haven't such an overwhelming need for technicians and administrative personnel (of which the bourgeoisie has many more than FRELIMO). We aren't afraid, in the first phase, of making the state a little less efficient, in order that it can safeguard its popular inspiration and its popular character. This is always preferable to having a state which is efficient in theory but entirely in the hands of the petty bourgeoisie because in the latter case we would find ourselves completely dependent upon our class enemy. How many African countries have experienced this phenomenon and thus fallen into the hands of privileged classes!

We will destroy all the structures and tendencies which are characteristic of the capitalist system. It's the people who must take over everything since the only ones "qualified" in our country are the people, the people who have struggled for liberation.

(Machel:1976)

The new forms of people's power established in the liberated territories and the "qualified personnel" tempered in the armed struggle found themselves in a hostile climate, once they reached Maputo. After an initial euphoric phase characterized by endless meetings and critical debates about all inherited forms and discourses, the weight of old claims for ways of doing and being began to reappear. "Authoritative" voices with fixed notions of technical expertise, international "standards" and legal correctness began to reassert themselves. The problems in the day to day running of a country of more than ten million were on a scale and complexity very different from the problems of running a liberation war and building up rudimentary socio-economic structures within a war economy. "Victory" included dealing with a lot of inherited state forms – agencies, institutions, practices and discourses that had regulated the day to day running of society under colonialism. Finding new forms and "qualified" personnel from the armed struggle to tackle them was not easy, particularly from a population that was 90 percent illiterate. People of confidence from the era of the armed struggle often proved very vulnerable when it came to drawing on the political expertise they had gained from the liberated zones to counter claims of organizational and technical competence from those they were called to direct and supervise.

Within a year of independence, senior FRELIMO leaders were giving more sober assessments of the weight of inherited structures. Oscar Monteiro's speech to open the First National Conference on the State Apparatus in 1976 attests to this.

In his message to the nation at the swearing in of the Transitional Government, Comrade President Samora defined it as the first government which represented the mass of the people, and as the executive arm of FRELIMO, he attributed the following tasks to it: to decolonize structures and mentalities; to extend people's democratic power to the whole country; to function in close liaison with the workers. We can see now that instead of communicating our experience to the entire country, instead of impressing upon the state apparatus throughout Mozambique the popular and revolutionary character that it had assumed in the liberated areas, we were swamped by the administrative machinery left behind by colonialism. Instead of giving direction, we were controlled and directed.

(Quoted in Saul (ed.) 1985:86)

Four years later, President Samora Machel in an address to the Council of Ministers returned to reflect on these same problems.

The state apparatus is the principal site of a bureaucratic petty-bourgeoisie created by colonial-capitalism during its last years of existence,



which today is the principal depository of its values, conceptions, habits, methods of work, of its ideology and therefore its practice. This same state apparatus is the fundamental instrument for the application of the Party political line in all social domains; it is, thus, the central instrument for the construction of socialism in our country.

(Council of Ministers:1980)

Party and state, then, had become inextricably intermingled, and those dominating the state apparatus had no trust in popular solutions.

The old ways of seeing the world, the cultural ethos of capitalism, did not, then, disappear overnight. There has been a persistent tendency in Mozambique for new groups of "civilizers" and "social promoters" to emerge, based within the state apparatus, and claiming expertise for programmes of national development. Yet many have proved as incapable as their colonial predecessors in tapping the real energies and resources of the masses, their paternalistic stance and propensity to make the revolution for others ultimately as deadening to popular energies and initiatives as the heavy hand of colonialism had been.

This kind of tension between a society managed by top-down directives from experts and a society based on people's power is fundamental to the process of socialist construction. It therefore becomes instructive to trace these tensions over the years between a political discourse on literacy with the illiterate viewed as important human resources (and with work methods based on mobilization and persuasion) over against a bureaucratic discourse on literacy with illiterates viewed as administrative categories (and work methods based on top-down orders).

Certainly in the period prior to 1978, as we have seen, literacy was viewed as a profoundly political and cultural question. A dramatic new space was opened up by the coup in Portugal. Women and men throughout Mozambique suddenly assumed responsibility for their own lives, in their communities and in their workplaces. This extended from neighbourhood security and street-cleaning to projects of self-education. The broad literacy movement that emerged was a vital component of this process.

The decision to mount mass, state-sponsored literacy campaigns was understood as a mechanism for giving more support to literacy initiatives. Many provincial delegations in their reports to the Ribaue Seminar just prior to independence put in strong pleas for support from the Ministry of Education and Culture soon to be established, particularly in terms of funding, training and teaching materials. What is not clear is whether there was debate about how the state should provide this support or questioning about whether

structurally it was appropriate to house literacy within the Ministry of Education and Culture rather than in party structures or in a literacy commission with more autonomy. Probably the possible contradictions between mass campaigns for literacy and state sponsored schooling were not evident at the time. In 1976 and 1977, there was a vision of a transformed formal schooling system which would link school with community and study with production, making the school itself an active center of face to face democracy and a dynamic force for development initiatives throughout rural districts and urban neighbourhoods. Thus the possibility of literacy's having a tendency to become bureaucratized by becoming part of state-sponsored educational services did not loom as a danger.

There are many aspects of the establishment of a national literacy service that are not clear. While the option of a single campaign to eradicate illiteracy was obviously not available in a country of more than ten million, nine million of whom were illiterate, there is nothing in the archives that indicates debate around the decision to take workers in centers of organized production as the priority. It was an option that had many implications, since situations of organized production were, in fact, not plentiful, by far the main body of the labour force being in family sector agriculture or the informal sector. It would seem that a series of biases were thus institutionalized, privileging urban over rural, industrial workers over those in agriculture, wage labour over against the informal sector, men over women, and workplace over community<sup>2</sup>. Local initiatives from the bottom up gave way to top-down directives. Implicitly if not explicitly an argument turning on human capital and a linear connection between increased schooling and increased productivity was built into the state-sponsored programmes from the outset.

While the detailed historical reconstruction of the transition from promotion of literacy by the Dynamizing Groups to campaigns organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture has not been carried out, it would seem that at least in some provinces, the impact of the state-sponsored programme on local initiatives of "people's power" was quite negative. In Zambezia, for example, where a broad movement of People's Schools had flourished in 1975 and early 1976, the establishment of Ministry of Education schools and adult literacy programmes seems to have been done with little consideration for community control over existing literacy activities.

These "people's schools" later had to be recognized by the Ministry itself, sending those monitors who had shown some teaching ability to training courses. Some of these schools were later formalized and turned into primary schools. In this regard, a certain reaction from the population

was evident. They saw the intervention of the Ministry of Education as a bureaucratization of teaching, as if it was a question of taking power from the population over the control of these schools.

(Interview with Henrique N'Guiraze, 1985)

This is not to suggest that the spontaneous movement to create schooling had indefinite capacity to continue and consolidate, in Zambesia or elsewhere. In part, the initial euphoria could not be sustained. There was a real feeling in the air in those pre- and post-independence days that everything could be done – and done immediately. This included the rapid eradication of illiteracy. The problem proved to be more intractable. Volunteers prepared to work for one or two years became tired. The time span for how long it really took to learn reading and writing skills was clearly a long one. More sober assessments of the deep-set problems surrounding literacy and “people's power” began to emerge.

In part, however, there were also decisions made centrally with far-reaching consequences for the development of “people's power”. The Dynamizing Groups which had been such an important force in promoting literacy began to wield less power. In part this was due to a natural attrition rate. The GDs had been sought out by secret sympathizers, unable to link up openly with FRELIMO until this time. Many of them had proved their political trustworthiness and gone on to other important tasks. The GDs had also been sought out by opportunists, some of whom had been exposed and expelled.

There were also, however, political decisions taken about state and party in Mozambique that included a decision to phase out the Dynamizing Groups. This decision had a strong impact on the movement to establish “people's power”. The III Congress of FRELIMO in 1977 had transformed the liberation movement into a Marxist-Leninist party, with a programme to establish party cells at the base. This fundamentally diluted the power of the GDs. Though they were still maintained, the legitimacy they had enjoyed as the right arm of FRELIMO was now seriously eroded and/or confused, both by the newly emerging Frelimo Party structures and the new state structures.

The big difference that exists. . . is that the Party is present in terms of defining and giving political orientation that people study. But in terms of a physical presence at local level, it's not there. Maybe this is one of the big difficulties that we meet in terms of participation of the population. This factor was acute when literacy passed over to be controlled by the Ministry of Education. Here there was a conflict. Who is in command? The Ministry of Education said they were in command and the GD said it's us in charge because we know the problems. But since the

state apparatus is privileged in terms of the means at its disposal, I think the idea (which I would even call an erroneous conception) that literacy is an administrative task of the state prevailed.

(Interview with Henrique N'Guiraze, 1985)

The problems of definition of roles and lines of accountability between party, state and Dynamizing Group structures were complex. They were made the more difficult still by the youth and inexperience of party members which translated itself into rigid stands and fear to adapt directives to local conditions. The Frelimo Party was by no means unaware of these problems and efforts were made in the party to counter the mechanical and inflexible way party representatives carried out their tasks.

By 1981, the "Boletim da Celula" published for party cell members included campaigns to counter top-down methods. Cartoons showed the party member, with suit and car, haranguing peasant women with the words, "It's necessary to increase production. More cotton means more clothing for our people." Had the women been given a chance to speak, the thoughts passing through their heads might have found voice. "But last year's cotton hasn't even been collected yet." "I thought he came to say something about the truck we requested." (Quoted in Fegro 1987:117)



Figure 9: "Mobilisation is done in a mechanical way without attention to the concrete situation"

Clearly it was a complex moment, a good deal clearer with hindsight than it was at the time. What seems indisputable is that in the field of education, there was a shift, at least in some areas, away from forms of "people's power" that had begun to emerge<sup>3</sup>. This shift meant that instead of people acting locally to define and organize their own forms of education, a paternalistic state began to act on their behalf.

People offered voluntarily to give their contribution to the task of literacy. Because of the enthusiasm that characterized the movement, the notion existed at that time that literacy would not be an activity stretched out over a long period of time. Maybe because of the information they had about other campaigns, some thought that we could make the majority of the population literate in three to five years. That's why people appeared offering to teach during this period as a national task, without demanding payment.

Clearly, in this situation, the real number of illiterates existing in the country was not taken into account. Maybe there was a bit of utopia in that period. But one way or another, I interpret it as a positive sentiment because, in fact, there was a strong consciousness and interest in education. . . . It was a question of facing the situation with courage and finding a way to advance. . . . When the monitors from the people's schools were integrated into the formal system of education, they also became bureaucratized and were drawn into the methods that predominated, which were from the colonial period. The population for its part began to see literacy as something, I wouldn't say imposed, but that came from the top down. It became a task of the state, carried out by functionaries. In this way, literacy ceased to be seen as an action emanating from the people, from their concrete reality.

(Interview with Henrique N'Guiraze, 1985)

If the first national literacy campaign was still a little ambiguous in situating literacy between schooling and new forms of "people's power", the subsequent campaigns came down clearly on the side of schooling. The practice of centralized literacy with a standard programme, texts, exams and calendar grew more and more distant from community and workplace realities, as we have seen in the detailed study of CIM.

Organizing time for literacy within a workplace setting, even one operating as efficiently as CIM, was fraught with difficulties. Even within the excellent organizational framework and allocation of human resources at CIM, it was virtually impossible to make space for workers to do literacy and at the same time keep up production. In many other workplaces, even the pretence of doing so was dropped by the mid-1980s, with classes organized

only on the occasion of the infrequent visits by officials from the Ministry of Education or other official visits. The classes ceased to function again the next day.

The very real difficulties in combining literacy with production were not tackled as organizational and political questions. They were reduced to administrative questions and tackled with administrative measures. The state intervened with a Council of Ministers decree, Law 1/81, in January 1981 that made literacy mandatory in each workplace and gave directives for the establishment of human resource departments with special literacy sections.

The law set up a particular division of responsibility, as we have seen earlier, and an accountability structure which has tended to shape literacy activities profoundly. The law set out to clarify the responsibilities of each of the three main bodies involved in literacy – the education ministry, workplace management and party/mass organizations. The Ministry of Education role was reduced to a normative and methodological one. The role of the Party was simply to be in close collaboration with the human resources department, which for its part was to coordinate, plan, implement and control the activities of literacy and post-literacy. There was no role for the illiterate themselves!

Through Law 1/81, it became mandatory to include literacy targets as part of the state plan. Article 4 read as follows:

The annual plan of each economic, social or service unit must include a register and target figures for literacy and adult education. In particular, the annual plan must include the total of workers to become literate and to be integrated into adult education activities and the human, material and financial resources to allocate to this end.

Law 1/81 Council of Ministers

The establishment of a literacy law as a response to dwindling numbers in the literacy campaigns came during a period in which formal, hierarchical style took hold in a number of sectors. It was a period in which the National Planning Commission became extremely powerful with centralized, top-down planning prevailing. Plan targets became a powerful accountability structure, reducing illiterates to administrative categories and literacy to a numbers game in many areas. The earlier language of mobilization and literacy for critical consciousness no longer existed. Metas, the plan targets, dominated the discourse.

The literacy section of the human resources department worked up endless charts on enrollment, attendance and pass rates. The concern about dropouts focussed on numbers. Reports on classes visited spoke of participa-



tion by which was meant attendance. Visits by district education staff got reduced to discussions about whether targets were being met rather than opportunities for pedagogical support for teachers with meager training. Nor were there many words of encouragement for workers struggling to juggle job and study and family responsibilities, and this amidst a crisis of survival in the face of an increasingly brutal war and severe economic crisis. Often the visits by education staff to literacy classes, instead of offering commendations to those who were mastering fatigue and hunger to tackle reading and writing each day, became a harangue about those who were absent.

In subsequent self-criticisms at the time of the IV Congress in April 1983, the Frelimo Party offered a number of reasons for over-centralization and top-down methods, one of which was a desperate attempt to deal with the lack of trained cadres and a kind of crisis management mentality in the face of war, drought and destabilization. All of these pushed for more rather than less centralization.

The fundamental underlying reason, however, was identified in the report to the IV Congress by the Central Committee and was referred to as a profound disbelief in the capacities of the people. Mention was made of a group of aspiring bourgeois.

[T]hey try to distort the class character of our revolution by transforming it into a technocratic process through which they can control power. This social stratum actively opposes any measures that aim at simplifying organisation and methods, democratising leadership or increasing the workers' share in planning and controlling production. Because of their book-learning, aspirants to the bourgeoisie despise solutions from the people. They are unable to learn from the people. So they reject the experience of the liberated areas. They reject the small-scale projects that require the intelligence, sensitivity and understanding of the people and prefer the projects that come ready made from abroad.

(Frelimo Party 1983:72)

The directives from the IV Congress put decentralization on the agenda and the district as the base for planning. For literacy this was meant to mark the beginning of a planning process workplace by workplace, recognizing production rhythms as basic parameters and social conditions of the workers during difficult times as paramount. Within these constraints, the idea was to build in a good deal more flexibility, and a process of involvement and ownership of literacy through the planning process, moving away from an administrative approach to literacy and seeing workers once again as vital resources for development. Efforts in this direction, however, were severely hampered by the deteriorating situation caused by the war.



### Language again: State formation or "difference(s)" as a resource

Amidst the ongoing tensions between moments of popular control over literacy and moments of top-down directives, several key questions recur. Language was most certainly one of them. As we have seen, the whole question of language in literacy was fraught with complexities. The experiences of literacy at CIM serve only to underscore language as a recurrent and powerful theme. The need for socio-linguistic investigation to begin to map out more clearly language practices and their meanings is clear. In its absence, one can but signal some of the most visible layers of the problem, and perhaps at least begin to pose more adequate questions about language.

As we have seen above, the double colonization of Mozambique by Portuguese-speaking and English-speaking powers, cut short the power struggles between the various African peoples, and hence any possibility for one linguistic group to gain enough control to impose a single Mozambican language throughout the territory. The forms of colonialism were such that no single European language prevailed and no widespread schooling for Africans was deemed necessary. This was different from the British colonies, for example, where indirect rule policies resulted in building up a class of African civil servants and semi-skilled workers from the beginning of the century.

As documented earlier, moments of nationalist aspirations over the years tended to include the use of Mozambican languages. The early Lourenco Marques African press published in Ronga – but of course was limited in circulation to southern Mozambique. Critiques of the Portuguese included their inability to use Mozambican languages the way the foreign missions and the labour recruitment authorities from South Africa did.

For those Mozambicans gathered in Dar es Salaam to form FRELIMO in the early 1960s, the project of national unity resulted in a decision to adopt Portuguese as the language of the struggle for national independence. Given their origins in various linguistic groups and the paramount importance of building up an identity as Mozambicans with unifying symbols, the adoption of Portuguese as the language of national unity is understandable. And indeed as we have seen in Chapter 4, the forms of the liberation struggle transformed Portuguese into a language that did belong to those Mozambicans who took part in the struggle. A whole culture of revolution developed over the ten years of armed struggle, with songs, poetry, slogans and important texts all circulating in Portuguese. A significant but overlooked aspect in the development of a political culture in Portuguese is that it was done *simultaneously with the valorization of first languages*. Integration into the FRELIMO culture in-

cluded not just an introduction to songs and poetry and slogans in Portuguese. It also meant learning the songs and dances and traditions of the various language groupings that made up Mozambique. And these traditional dance forms and forms of song and story telling were themselves being transformed, incorporating themes out of the armed struggle, for example, or encouraging women to do dances that customarily were done only by men.

For those Mozambicans who became part of FRELIMO, then, words took on a new power, giving voice to their lives in multiple languages. Part of the experience was valorization of their own mother tongues, and hence a process of self-affirmation and affirmation of their own experience as part of a cultural and historical collectivity.

For those who were not caught up in the armed struggle, the affirmation of self through language came only with the coup in Portugal. The spontaneous literacy movement that emerged at this time included establishment of literacy centers and "people's schools" – and part of the power of these new forms of education was that they used local languages!

Little of this seemed to have carried over to urban workers in a place like CIM, where old practices and feelings about language shaped in colonial days were encountered more or less intact. It is interesting to conjecture whether these practices and feelings would have been different a decade earlier, in the context of post-coup euphoria with its critical discourses about Portuguese language and culture combined with high energy and creativity in developing a political culture which included Mozambican languages. At any rate, if there was an opening around language a decade earlier, intimately linked with a moment that also brought recognition of practical skills and political maturity, of "expertise" derived from participation in the struggle to end colonialism, this opening had closed down again by 1985. Formal education and professional qualifications were once again the basis of expertise, with their related demands for language skills in Portuguese. Invisible again was the gendered, raced and classed opportunity structure for acquisition of these skills.

Language options in Mozambique, as elsewhere, are clearly complex. Within the trajectory of whatever option is taken, all regional, class and gender differences tend to be obscured. Established languages lead also to correct ways of speaking and writing these languages. Elsewhere throughout history, both church and later school practices gradually brought about a social recognition of this set of forms as all there is to say and the only way to say it. (Corrigan:1983)

If both the political and practical reasons for Mozambique's adoption of Portuguese are self-evident, what is not so clear is the silence over the years on the value of other Mozambican languages. Implicitly local languages have

tended to be denigrated because they are not actively signalled as valuable, as another cultural resource to draw on in building post-independence Mozambique. Prevalent still are references to Portuguese as a "language" and Changana or Shona as "dialects", a clear indication of the power dimensions of language options and the colonial project of denying a culture and claim to civilization by Africans. In response to a question about languages spoken, few Mozambicans would think to mention the multiple African languages they speak. Comments can be overheard in literacy classrooms as a teacher (or fellow student!) chides a worker for coming into the classroom speaking Makua or Shona. This is another carryover from colonial classrooms with their special monitors just to detect children not speaking Portuguese in order to have them punished.

The under-valuing of local languages is complemented by a complete over-valuing of the Portuguese language. The comments by ordinary Mozambicans point to a complete mystification of it as a terribly difficult language that few people can ever really master. As seen earlier, the period immediately after independence was one where the ways the Portuguese language had developed in Mozambique were signalled. People were both fascinated and validated by words which were unique to Mozambican Portuguese, some tracing their derivation to Mozambican languages and others to a century of contact with English in the mines. The exotic word for bus, "maximbombo" was much more interesting than "onibus" as in Portugal. As we have seen earlier, words like "engajado" and "responsavel" that had become current during the armed struggle were unknown with these usages in Lisbon.

Political distance was taken from Lisbon and the literary canons of Portugal's epic poet, Camoes. There was an expectation that Portuguese, as a living language, would evolve in Mozambique. Perhaps even in this era, little of this debate reached the 90 percent of the population that was illiterate. But in recent years, even in literary circles in Maputo, little of this critical distance has been evident. Certainly in the training courses for literacy teachers and the literacy classrooms, the objective reality of poor verbal skills was firmly embedded in a larger cultural context in which a powerful discourse of super-valorization of Portuguese and denigration of vernacular languages was still very much intact.

At certain moments immediately after independence, difference was recognized as a resource for building the new Mozambique. The most striking celebration of difference as a resource took place not around language as such but around dance forms and music. There was a veritable explosion of excitement as cultural groups were selected from districts and provinces to descend finally on the national capital for a week of performances in factories

and schools and hospitals by day and in the a national sports arena at night. And of course this rich display of cultural diversity included use of a variety of Mozambican languages. That celebration of difference as a resource to build on has not found its way into the discussions about how to do literacy in a second language.

More recent studies from both first world and third world settings point to the need for much more detailed study of language policies. Guebert, for example, in a first world setting in which she analyzes French immersion programmes for Canadian children, shows clear evidence of success in literacy in a second language.(Guebert:1984) Her study highlights the need to look at other factors such as socio-economic position, experience of a literate environment prior to literacy training, simultaneous maintenance and valorization of first language skills and the notion of additive bilingualism.

At the level of international policy circles, the earlier dogmatism about language policies seems to have been somewhat dissipated. From earlier documents that took as axiomatic that the best medium for instruction is the mother tongue, we now get this kind of statement from the seminar on campaigning for literacy held in Udaipur in 1982:

Ideally, literacy was the ability to read and write in the mother tongue. However, a regional, national or even a metropolitan language (such as English, French or Portuguese) was to be acceptable as a language of literacy in particular political settings, at some particular points in history. . . . The Udaipur Seminar agreed that the choice of language policy of literacy was not merely a technical matter. The question of choice of language of literacy was intertwined with the political economy of the country or region where literacy was to be taught. In its ideal definition, literacy was the ability to read and write in the mother tongue. However, literacy should not doom the new literate to a localite existence, bounded by a small community of people speaking his or her language, and render the new literate unable to join the mainstream of politics and economy of the region or country. The national or official language ultimately must be taught, though literacy may be taught first in the mother tongue or a local vernacular before shifting to the national or official language.

(Bhola 1983: 214)

Clearly language imposition can include both imposition of a second language or imposition of a first language despite motivation to tackle a second language, in a situation where the second language is recognized as the language of mobility and employment. Equally fascinating here is the unquestioned assumption that capacity to read and write a local language is tantamount to "doom"<sup>4</sup>, at best a stepping stone to the national or official

language. For whom does this kind of literacy in a local setting hold promise or threat? What assumptions are implicit here? Clearly literacy undertaken as a totalizing project for social control and the creation of "political subjects" will not view literacy for a "localite existence" as success. But a literacy programme committed to empowerment in a local community, cooperative or workplace, in which women and men are invited to "speak their lives, read the world and write history" might well view growing literacy skills put to immediate use in a "localite existence" as positive indeed. Organization of subordination and marginalization in a society is clearly accomplished not only through the social relations of class, race and gender, but also through the social relations of "location".

The construction of "national" and the "national interest" over against the suppression of what is merely "local" is a vital mechanism of state formation<sup>5</sup>. Re-presentations of the past that make invisible the specificity of the local, devouring the "local" into a homogenized organization of parameters of time and space that constitute the nation are common. Common also, however, are yearnings for community that resist this process and find forms of expression, including a language and vocabulary to name and validate the local. (Alonso:1988)

Clearly, then, language questions are central. Overly facile language prescriptions are to be avoided. Even within Mozambique, where there was a current of opinion always present that implied mother tongue literacy as self-evidently the more viable option, a more careful empirical investigation into functioning literacy centers showed results that flew in the face of this common sense wisdom. In the cooperatives of Ilha Josina Machel, with predominantly female members, the exam results from the literacy programme in Portuguese were among the highest in the country, rules of thumb about rural women as the most difficult target group notwithstanding. The explanation lies in the context. The women here were part of a project to encourage peasant participation in decision making in cooperatives. Their voices were solicited and valued on a daily basis as their cooperatives expanded. They were therefore highly motivated to read and count as part of a larger process of empowerment in rapidly developing cooperatives in which command of Portuguese was essential. Their teachers were also their sons and daughters, Class 4 graduates without a chance to study further, who were part of the cooperative movement. The young people gained work points for time spent in accounting and book-keeping and literacy activities.

Ilha Josina hints at the socio-linguistic complexity in other ways as well. It is an area which for decades has sent most of its male labour force to the mines in South Africa. Interviews with men in the community about their desires for

schooling brought responses about the uselessness of learning Portuguese and the desirability of learning English. On one field visit, I was intrigued to see local teen-agers with vocabulary lists on the back of their school books. The contents of the notebooks was all in Portuguese. The vocabulary lists on the back were words in Changana translated into English! (Marshall:1984)

*Literacy teachers – the dilemma of how to educate the educator*

The task of teachers and cadres in education is an extraordinarily delicate one because like us, they grew up and were formed in the old world, and carry within them many bad habits and defects, a lot of individualism and ambition, many corrupt and superstitious attitudes. . . . Teachers and cadres must behave like the doctor who, before approaching the patient in the operating theatre, disinfects and sterilises himself so as not to infect the patient.

(Machel 1973:22)

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances, and that the educator himself needs educating.

(Marx III Thesis on Feuerbach 1845)

The women and men involved as teachers in the mass literacy campaigns launched after 1978 did, indeed, emerge as a problematic factor. The evaluation of the first campaign pointed to the difficulties encountered by the teachers in using a method based on actual dialogue with the students.

In general, the method proposed was not applied. In practice, the teaching was most close to traditional-colonial methods, based on the schooling experiences of the literacy teachers, with characteristics of repetition and memorization. This leads to a mechanical learning, instead of establishing comprehension, reflection and creative application of the materials.

(INDE 1983:14)

Such difficulties, of course, are not unique to Mozambique, and can be found in many other experiences of literacy. Linda Harasim had this comment to make concerning Guinea Bissau:

The Freire method is centred on a literacy animator who coordinates the cultural circle. The animator is to be a polyvalent agent, integrating political mobilization, health and preventive medicine, agriculture and



community development with literacy work, and should be a highly conscious person who can talk with the people and return to them in an organized form what they themselves have offered in a disorganized form. . . . The volunteers for the literacy work came from the primary and secondary schools. They had neither the training nor the expertise to be political agitators, literacy teachers and community developers at the same time.

(Harasim 1983:369/370)

Cheryl Hirshon's moving and humorous account of her experiences as a literacy coordinator in Nicaragua point to the same thing.

#### The Dialogue.

It was Step 1 in every lesson, and by far the most difficult to conduct. The brigadistas found it a frustrating and confusing assignment. What was it for? Certainly they'd never been taught that way. In all too many of the classes it was done badly, or ignored altogether. Saturday after Saturday we spent trying to make them see its importance and master the subtleties of conducting it. It has to be a conversation, not a lecture. And it has to come from the campesinos themselves, from their experiences. It has to be their thoughts. Look, everyone likes to talk about their experiences if they think the other person is interested. With the photo and your encouragement, they will get over their feelings of intimidation. But you have to think of questions which will unlock their experiences, then get them thinking about them.

(Hirshon 1983:104)

Teachers and their tendency to reproduce the manner in which they themselves were taught in primary schools is a common problem in educational activities anywhere. These tendencies became more acute in Mozambique, however, with the national campaigns. In the spontaneous literacy movement at independence, both monitors and literacy students were caught up in new configurations of power and knowledge embedded in "people's power". The community control of these schools and the role of the literacy students in organizing their own schooling and vetting their own teachers were key aspects. So was the sentiment of anger at the creation of ignorance by colonialism, a healthy corrective to the notion of the illiterate as deficient.

The broader political process was the real teacher. The dynamic of the teaching-learning situation was far from that of formal school classrooms behind which lies all the authority of the state. By the time of the national campaigns, however, there were strong tendencies towards formalizing literacy and establishing once again classroom practices based on the imposi-



tion of a language, a way of speaking it, and a definition of knowledge bounded by prescribed texts. The teachers were key factors in establishing these forms of schooling, a tendency which only increased over the years.

At CIM, these tendencies were strongly in evidence. The choice to make the literacy programme part of the "school", seeing it as just the first step in the educational pyramid, was one sign of this formalizing tendency. While it valorized literacy at one level, it also located it within a framework of "schooling" that brought with it many expectations from teachers, students and factory administrators. As we have seen in Chapter 6-8, the classroom process was one in which the teachers did reproduce the worst of their own experiences of authoritarian schooling, effectively robbing the students of any possibility of finding in the literacy classroom a space for voices and a rediscovery of words.

All this notwithstanding, one of the most fascinating aspects of the literacy process at CIM was the variety of hopes, desires and fears related to literacy. Despite all of the difficulties, many of the workers did make literacy work for them, and gained through it, if not a pass on the exam and success measured by Ministry of Education and factory administration standards, a greater command of language skills for their own lives. For some it meant the ability to make their way through the intricacies of urban life with less fear, gain some confidence in being able to do the mothering needed for their children's school success, work more effectively in local community politics, etc. The variety of the expectations brought to literacy made it work for some even when it was at its most bureaucratic and authoritarian.

With the state sponsored literacy campaigns, "illiteracy" became, again, an administrative category, albeit to be resolved by a paternalistic socialist state rather than a fascist colonial one. Workers drawn into literacy, whether as students or as teachers, found themselves within an institution that validated neither of them as real resources for socialist construction. Having looked at the recruitment and training of the teachers in Chapter 4, it is hard to see how the literacy classrooms could have led to anything except the establishment of new forms of subordination.

In fact, this should not be seen as surprising, if we reflect for a moment on the insertion of state provided schooling in the larger society and how teachers learn to teach. It would seem that, in general, teachers' approaches to teaching are determined through some combination of their own experiences as pupils, their professional education and their actual experiences of teaching. (Dale:1977:50) The teachers' own experiences as pupils are potent forces. Imitative practices from their own experiences in a very powerful institution are fundamental. A kind of social knowledge, almost an oral

tradition, of how to do schooling prevails. The established means for doing the job of teaching are taken as common sense knowledge and applied. For Mozambican teachers, this has meant drawing on experiences either in colonial classrooms or in overcrowded primary schools with untrained teachers immediately after independence, both far from the dynamic vision of classroom interaction and community engagement envisioned by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

As for professional training, the courses in the literacy training centers or in improvised conditions in the districts, just reproduced more of the same. There was nothing in the training experience that actually gave the trainees a concrete experience of active participation, horizontal rather than vertical communication, a pedagogy of questions rather than of answers.

The classroom experiences of the literacy teachers also shaped their teaching. If in "western" classrooms, ideas of participatory methods often flounder when faced with class size or student attitudes that put basic control on the agenda, the literacy classrooms in Mozambique shaped the teachers' way of teaching in another manner. The passivity and silence of the learners was a powerful force. Many workers were there by decision of their section head rather than by persuasion. Often they were hungry and tired. All were locked into silence by an idea of classroom decorum socially learned. Many were very inhibited by their lack of command of the Portuguese language. Women were doubly oppressed, fearing also to speak out in front of men, and at the request of a male teacher. The inexperienced teacher tended to fill the silence with his or her own voice – mini-lectures on hygiene, cooperatives, endless repetitions of closed questions demanding only a chorus of "yes" or "no" from the students. Rarely was anything approaching the rich naming of experiences, the deconstructing of one way of seeing and the construction of another to be observed.

Clearly being posed in this situation were fundamental pedagogical questions turning on theories of knowledge and popular power.

... "pedagogy" is a more complex and extensive term than "teaching", referring to the integration in practice of particular curriculum content and design, classroom strategies and techniques, a time and space for the practice of these new strategies and techniques, and evaluation purposes and methods. All of these aspects of educational practice come together in the realities of what happens in classrooms. Together they organize a view of how a teacher's work within an institutional context specifies a particular version of what knowledge is of most worth, what it means to know something, and how we might construct representations of ourselves, others, and our physical and social environment. In other words, talk

about pedagogy is simultaneously talk about the details of what students and others might do together *and* the cultural politics such practices support. To propose a pedagogy is to propose a political vision.

(Simon 1987:371)

The pedagogy of the earlier literacy movement had begun to validate the lives and experiences of those who had been subordinated by colonialism. Collective renamings of situations and selves constructed under colonialism had been integral to it, in the heady moments of independence, with their new disposition of power and knowledge. The seeds of a new pedagogy were to be found in this movement, a "pedagogy of empowerment" that challenged old discourses that subordinated and marginalized people for being peasants or workers, for being black, for being female.

Empowerment literally means to give ability to, to permit or enable. When we hear the word empowerment used in education, it is usually being employed in the spirit of critique. Its referent is the identification of oppressive and unjust relations within which there is an unwarranted limitation placed on human action, feeling, and thought. Such limitations are seen as constraining a person from the opportunity to participate on equal terms with other members of a group or community to whom have accrued the socially defined status of "the privileged/the competent". To empower in this perspective is to counter the power of some people or groups to make others "mute". To empower is to enable those who have been silenced to speak. It is to enable the self-affirming expression of experiences mediated by one's history, language, and traditions. It is to enable those who have been marginalized economically and culturally to claim in both respects a status as full participating members of a community.

(Simon 1987:374)

A "pedagogy of empowerment" had emerged strongly at independence – and then receded again. The content of the educational programme established after independence continued to reflect ideas about building "people's power", replete with new values of participation, collectivity and internationalism. At the same time, old forms, antithetical to local control and spaces for self-education reasserted themselves. The changes in content, then, were not matched by changes in forms. Styles of schooling prevailed in the literacy classroom in which old categorizations, old power/subordination roles were played out. Students were once again silenced. There were strong tendencies for literacy to become formalized and bureaucratized, with the new moral order of dedicated and disciplined Mozambican workers and peasants

constructing socialism defined centrally, pronouncements from the political leadership substituting a vital process of empowerment at the grassroots.

The teachers were key in establishing this, a situation not unique to Mozambique by any means. Henry Giroux in his analysis of North American teacher training, points to the same phenomenon.

In many respects teacher-education programs have simply not given teachers the conceptual tools they need in order to view knowledge as problematic, as a historically conditioned, socially constructed phenomenon. Similarly, the objectification of knowledge is usually accompanied by the objectification of the classroom social encounter. Knowledge is not just content; its use also suggests specific kinds of classroom social relationships. When knowledge is seen as objective and "out there", it is usually accompanied by top-to-bottom forms of pedagogy in which there is little dialogue or interaction. . . . But the way pupils construct meaning, the importance of subjectivity, and the value of knowledge outside of the "rationality" of strict science are important dimensions of the process of curriculum and instruction. These modes of knowing represent important pedagogical principles that future educators need to understand in order to be able to shape their *own* lives in a self-determining manner. . . . Knowledge in the technocratic rationality view is defined and used so as to be separated from the lived histories and biographies not only of teachers but of students. . . . Thus knowledge is used not only to mask the role that it plays in shaping how people view themselves and others, it also serves to ignore how important the relationship is among knowledge, context and learning.

(Giroux 1980:19)

The real irony is that the teachers themselves were also silenced. Their own positions of subordination within workplace hierarchies as junior staff allocated to literacy often ran counter to their own job expectations. Many of them compared their own "dead end" as literacy teachers over against other colleagues with the same educational level who had entered with them and were now in professional training courses which were perceived as having a future. Ministry of Education officials saw them only as part of the problem, their low academic and professional levels contributing to the students' learning problems. No discussion of the poor results in literacy was complete without public laments about the inadequacies and limited competence of the voluntary/conscripted literacy teachers!

### *A movement to revitalize literacy*

As we have seen above, the IV Congress in April 1983 brought strong criticisms of top-down communications and work methods that did not have

faith in the capacity of ordinary people to organize and make decisions. A somewhat uncertain movement for renewal of "people's power" emerged, made the more problematic by the worsening military and economic situation. One aspect of this was a desire for a new approach to literacy and a group of people within the DNEA began to work on plans for a pilot project in staff training.

In fact, the first years of the new project have been dramatic in their impact. The initial discussions about what changes of content should be introduced were simple enough. A huge question rapidly emerged, however, once the discussions began to tackle how to change the forms of doing literacy staff training as well as the contents. Where were the people to staff the pilot project to come from, people with a vision and a commitment to revitalizing literacy?

Exposure to other ways of doing and thinking about literacy emerged as one possible strategy. Provincial instructors were to make up the staff team at the pilot center, and two groups of four junior staff members were selected to make 2-4 month study visits, one to Nicaragua and Brazil and the other to Guinea Bissau and Portugal<sup>6</sup>. A third group worked in the national office in Maputo, planning and strategizing and preparing resource materials. The study visits created dramatic results, with those doing them bringing back a new energy, vision and critical framework to apply to literacy, a new sense of themselves as part of a larger movement of popular education.

At the beginning of 1986, with much anxiety about whether it would be possible to put their new ideas into practice, the three groups proceeded to Manga, near Beira, where a newly renovated center awaited them. With strong support from the newly appointed National Director of Adult Education, the staff team at Manga thought, debated, sang, acted, danced and dialogued their way to a new methodology for literacy and adult education during 1986. They prepared programme guidelines, carried out and evaluated three different types of courses, ranging from short term courses for "voluntary" literacy teachers to refresher courses for provincial and district instructors, as well as a dramatically revamped ten month programme for "professional educators".

Through it all, a pedagogy of empowerment began to emerge. Giving voice to the trainees was seen as central to the training programmes themselves. The classrooms were posed not as space to fill with the teacher's voice transmitting knowledge but spaces for dialogues with the students. The trainers themselves were enthused with the process and in the first courses, worked from dawn till midnight day after day, the high energy levels emerging at least in part from their own exhilaration at having the space to develop something that was really theirs.

The center has brought about a dramatic reversal in its approach to staff training, then, starting with the experiences of the trainees as fundamental. In a complete switch from the old style of top-down directives, the courses take the real work problems of the groups of trainees – pedagogical, organizational, political, personal – as the starting point. The critique of formal hierarchies and top-down methods extends into the classroom itself and new methodologies that can give voice to the students are on the agenda. It also extends into the life of the training center, where training staff now share a common dining room with the participants, with no special privileges for the staff, a much talked about innovation!

A growing capacity for pedagogical analysis exists, with the real problems of power understood as central to pedagogy. In a discussion about whether it was appropriate for a district education staff member visiting a center to do a model lesson, Antonio Goncalves, the trainer responsible for pedagogy mused along these lines.

For me, it's an interesting question. It poses the whole dilemma of the role of the instructor. The instructor tends to be seen as the authority, the one who knows how to do it, the one with the answers. We have to discover how the instructor can interact with the adult education teachers in a way that has the teachers themselves sharing in coming to the solution.

(Marshall & McCord:1987)

It is obviously far too soon to know what impact this renewal movement will have. The training team anticipated some resistance. Up to this point, it would seem that resistance from those in positions of power in the hierarchies of education who might be threatened by this new approach is fairly weak. Far stronger are the energies and enthusiasm from those who have done courses in the center. These courses seem to have succeeded in establishing a totally new approach, one which valorizes the experiences and lives of the participants. Manga has provided a space to name experiences of silencing and subordination, and given the course participants a critical framework into which they can situate their experiences in the district centers. A strong mystique has developed around "being at Manga" and the trainees are now networking to give each other mutual support as they try to introduce the new methodology into their provinces, reproducing some of the same dynamics that have characterized the courses and workshops at Manga itself.

Any assessment of the strength and significance of this present movement of revitalization and where it will lead, with its new stress on popular participation and control would be highly premature. What is important to



signal is that socialist construction turns on exactly these kinds of halting steps, both forwards and backwards, even when under siege. Despite all of the devastation the apartheid regime is heaping upon Mozambique, creating a situation of disastrous proportions in which an entire people is in flight from wide-spread terrorist actions throughout the rural districts, points of revitalization and new openings continue to emerge in various sectors.

Tracing out these openings and closures over the years in literacy is important because literacy takes us to the core of Mozambique's larger project of socialist construction. Clearly one of the most vexing problems historically in transitional processes has been that of space for genuine "people's power" – for popular initiatives that can engender a new vitality in community and workplace, with new forms for people to express their lives and concerns. Questions of language and voice are central. Literacy, historically, as we have seen, has often been used not to consolidate popular initiatives but as a stratification device. It has served as a means of social regulation that, while it defines some people in, also filters many people out. Different concepts of literacy and language are also different versions of politics.

Language and voice, then, are central to the struggles for a society characterized by a new texture of social forms. A society based on "people's power" suggests forms of genuinely participatory democracy throughout the multiple workplace and community settings in which women and men collectively reproduce things and ideas and people. Integral to this is a social literacy in which working people develop a capacity to locate themselves in their local times and space/places, to legitimate their activities and inter-relatedness. People start to know their own way around, to give voice to their own experience, and recognize their own ways of seeing *and saying* as valid and communicable.

These problems of transition are, of course, easier to analyze than resolve. Countless processes of socialist construction flounder exactly at this point of how to create the political space for genuine and growing and diverse expressions of "people's power". Clearly literacy, understood in some fashion as a process of "speaking lives, reading the world and writing history" is central to this.



# Notes

## Chapter One

- 1 The data collection involved extensive interviewing. In general, the informants' names have been maintained, except for the few instances where the information given was of a sufficiently sensitive nature that it could have had repercussion for the informants. In these cases fictitious names were used.
- 2 For excellent studies of the struggle for independence in Mozambique, see Mondlane: 1969, 1983; Saul: 1973; Saul: 1979; Davidson, Slovo and Wilkinson: 1976; Munslow: 1983; Isaacman and Isaacman: 1983; Serra and Medeiros: 1983.
- 3 Important contributions to this paper include Corrigan: 1980; Jessop: 1980; Poulantzas: 1978; Corrigan, Ramsay and Sayer: 1978; Corrigan and Sayer: 1985; Draper: 1977, 1978; Sayer: 1986.
- 4 For a fascinating account of this process in contemporary Mexico, see Ana Maria Alonso. 1988. The effects of truth: re-presentations of the past and the imagining of community. *Journal of Historical Sociology*. 1 (1) March: 33-57.
- 5 The concept of social literacy is taken from P. Corrigan and V. Gillespie's *Class struggle, social literacy and idle time Brighton*: Noyce, 1978. Corrigan and Gillespie make a fascinating study of the context into which public libraries were inserted in England, arguing that they are best understood as a means to control and contain existent collective cultural practices of the working class, namely forms of self-education through public readings in pub settings, through working class publication and distributions networks, etc. Social literacy thus has a double sense, referring on the one hand to a specificity of content and purpose according to the class circumstances within which it flourishes but also to literacy engendering social information/formation/reformation linked to more profound social changes.
- 6 I am drawing heavily for this discussion of state and civil society on the work of Derek Sayer and Philip Corrigan, particularly "Revolution Against the State: The Context and Significance of Marx's Later Writings" (1987) and Corrigan (ed): 1980.
- 7 By discourse in this thesis, I am referring to social relationships characterized by a common domain of language, symbolic representations and practices through which social existence is organized, and through which are mediated

both an internal sense of belonging and an outward sense of being "other". (Terdiman, Richard. *Discourse-Counter-Discourse*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1985.) I shall draw extensively on the work of Dorothy Smith concerning the social organization of knowledge (Smith: 1975) and textually mediated discourse (Smith: 1984) as a contemporary form of rule under capitalism. Smith argues that the establishment of textually mediated discourse opening up social life to the regulatory and controlling practices is accomplished through working up the features of our society in such a way that major areas of social life - sexuality, activities of work and leisure, family - become objects of socially organized discursive practices through which ruling institutions regulate women's and men's lives. (Smith: 1987)

- 8 Shirley Brice Heath has done a series of fascinating comparative studies of pre-literacy in middle class and immigrant families in the United States. She documents that contrast between the language usage in these settings. Young children of immigrant families tend to be shown things which they then copy, while the middle class child tends to be shown something, followed up with a verbal display of knowledge. The middle class child learns to both copy *and* name the action. Heath gives accounts of middle class toddlers' language learning which is treated as of sufficient importance to warrant interruption of the conversation of any set of adults. The mothering characteristic of middle class households means that pre-school children learn language skills for naming objects, for ordering accounts ("Tell Daddy what we did today") and for particular orderings of time and space well before they reach school. The middle class child entering the classroom already brings to schooling a sense of self as individual, as bearer of knowledge, and a know-how about how to "display" knowledge. Such a child brings to schooling a self-identity as a legitimate participant in particular kinds of discursive practices, all of which facilitate schooling achievements markedly different from those of children from immigrant households who bring none of this capacity to display knowledge, none of this sense of self as legitimate participants in discursive practices etc. (Lecture given at the University of Toronto, 1985) Basil Bernstein's work on class differentiation and language acquisition in England brings forward a very similar argument. Bernstein: 1973-1977)
- 9 For a detailed policy study of the campaigns and the factors going into literacy success in Mozambique, see Agneta Lind: 1985 and her forthcoming dissertation (International Institute of Education, University of Stockholm: 1988)
- 10 I am drawing from the work of Rosa Maria Torres in her article "Los CEP: Educacion Popular y Democracia Participativa en Nicaragua" (Torres: 1985). In this article about the post-literacy programmes in the Popular Education Collectives in Nicaragua, Torres teases out the distinctions in the role of popular education within a process of participatory democracy, identifying democratic access to education, a democratic educational process and education for participatory democracy.

## Chapter Two

- 1 Sergio Vieira, a senior Frelimo Party leader who is currently Director of the Center of African Studies at Eduardo Mondlane University and Director of the Frelimo Party School, gave an extraordinarily thought-provoking address entitled "The New Man [sic] is a Process" to the second conference of the Ministry of Education and Culture in 1977. In it, he reflected on the colonized consciousness as one in which the colonized are left without the capacity to locate themselves in their own history, geography and culture. Unfortunately the depth and sensitivity with which he analysed the colonized sense of self was not in any way extended to gendered senses of self. The oblivion to questions of gender in the use of language about "the New Man" and descriptions that assume women's experiences to be identical with men's in the society-in-the-making is to be found not only in Vieira's address but throughout Frelimo Party documents more generally. Yet another level of struggle will have to be waged in Mozambique to establish the gendered reality of social relations and the need for a language to describe them that does not render women invisible.
- 2 For two useful discussions of powerful pulls on Third World states to face two ways, signalling differing claims for legitimacy to metropolitan and national audiences, see H. Bernstein and P. Corrigan "Neither market nor state" in *Third World Studies*. London: Open University Press, 1983 and Jose Luis Coraggio's formulations of the need for a pedagogy of leadership on Fagen, R., Carmen Deere, Jose Luis Coraggio (eds.): 1986. For more extensive discussions of Mozambique see Isaacman and Isaacman: 1983; Munslow: 1983; Saul: 1986; Katzenellenbogen: 1982; First: 1983; Department of History, Eduardo Mondlane University: 1983. There is much still to be done to reconstruct the history of Mozambique's subordination to South Africa, particularly analysis that goes beyond the history of economic domination to explore the social relationships and cultural forms engendered.
- 3 For an excellent set of studies exploring these themes in the context of social formations in South Africa itself, posing a number of problematics with much bearing on comparable social processes in Mozambique, see Shula Marks and Anthony Atmore (eds.). 1980. *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*. London: Longman.
- 4 For excellent discussions of this period, see Isaacman and Isaacman: 1983; Munslow: 1983; Serra and Medeiros (eds.): 1983.
- 5 In Mozambique, where there were few voices of liberal dissent from the metropole to restrain the heavy hand of state coercion, the work of the commission to legitimize forced labour was almost superfluous. In neighbouring South Africa, however, with vociferous claims about native rights from missionary societies and reform groups, the "display" of the state

through royal commissions as a means of legitimizing labour practices took on great importance. For an excellent discussion of commissions of inquiry over the years in South Africa, and the ways in which the state constructs frameworks of knowledge in specific institutional forms which enable state regulation, see Adam Ashforth. On the "Native Question": A Reading of the Grand Tradition of Commissions of Inquiry. D.Phil dissertation. Oxford University, 1987.

This whole question of the social construction of the "native" and the multiplicity of measures to regulate African participation in the cash economy in ways complementary to and not competitive with colonial interest is a fascinating one. Mechanisms are to be found through British and French colonial history, ranging from the imposition of "hut" taxes and state marketing boards to the inducements of foreign trading companies offering credit and consumer goods. In Ghana, for example, an export economy was introduced at the beginning of this century, which included a profound reorganization of the labour process into intense exploitation of land and labour within a cocoa monoculture. Trading companies such as the United Africa Company (Unilever) fanned out throughout the rural areas offering combinations of seeds, credit and ready consumer goods. Cocoa production rose from zero in 1882 to 50,000 tons in 1914 and upwards of 200,000 tons annually from 1925 onwards. A cocoa marketing board holding a monopoly over sales on world markets further served to channel profits away from African producers and traders. For a detailed study of how Ghana's economy was shaped to serve the needs of the British Empire, see Judith Marshall. *Ghana 1945-1966: The Political Economy of Dependency*. Masters Thesis. Institute of Social Studies, The Hague. 1972 and Marshall: 1976. For studies in other parts of Africa see Sumner: 1981; Leys: 1975; Brett: 1973; Arrighi and Saul: 1973 etc.

- 6 Isaacman and Isaacman: 1983: 29. For an exceedingly rich analysis of this same phenomenon in Neighbouring South Africa, in which a "traditional" Africa is reconstructed in order to legitimize the construction of the administrative category of "native", see Ashforth: 1987.
- 7 I am indebted to Adam Ashforth for the insight about how the construction of the "native" and the "traditional" works to reorganize a dispensation of land and labour. (Ashforth: 1987)
- 8 A detailed examination of the origins of the migrant labour system from Mozambique to South Africa goes much beyond the scope of this study. For an excellent analysis, see Patrick Harries. *Kinship, ideology and the nature of pre-colonial migration. Labour migration from the Delagoa Bay Hinterland to South Africa up to 1985*. Marks and Rathbone (eds.): 1982.
- 9 I am drawing heavily on the excellent discussion of the moment of first encounter between European and African cultures in southern Africa by Jean

and John Comaroff in their article, "Through the looking glass: colonial encounters of the first kind" (Comaroff and Comaroff: 1988) The Comaroffs capture with rich detail the peculiar zeal of the early missionary expeditions by the London Missionary Society. They pose with clarity the important and often not entirely conscious role the missionaries played in mapping out the terrain in which the new ethos of industrial capitalism, with its notions of time, work and the individual, impacted on African societies. They also show how the missionaries were often caught in scripts cast by the very African actors they thought themselves to be writing into history.

- 10 A form of music typical of Portuguese clubs.
- 11 For fuller discussion of the forms of urban protest, see Isaacman and Isaacman: 1983: 61-78, and the Mozambican history series written in the Department of History, Eduardo Mondlane University (Serra, Carlos and Eduardo Medeiros (eds.) *Historia de Mocambique. Volume 2 Agressao Imperialista (1886-1930)*. Maputo: Cadernos Tempo: 1983: 279-299.)

### Chapter Three

- 1 The tendency for slippage between "literacy" understood as the ability to read and write and "literacy" as the ability to speak, read and write Portuguese is evident from the outset, both in policy documents and official references to education in Mozambique. I will endeavour throughout this study to make visible which language is being referred to and to distinguish between competencies in speaking, reading and writing these different languages, and the social settings for their use. A fuller socio-linguistic history remains to be reconstructed. It is urgently needed since questions of language, in Mozambique as elsewhere, are integrally linked to fundamental questions of knowledge and power.
- 2 The popular ranking of who knew how to colonize best persisted for many years, up to and including the era of military collaboration against the decade-long armed struggles in the 1960s and 1970s. Popular ranking in southern Africa gave the British highest marks, followed by the South Africans, then the Rhodesians and, only at the bottom, the Portuguese. An expression in Portuguese used in Mozambique to this day about doing things up for show is "Para o ingles ver", literally "For the English to see".
- 3 State provision of mass education at a moment of social change characterized by currents of contestation and unrest is certainly not unique to Mozambique. In many countries in Europe and North America, the first part of the nineteenth century saw a fear of mass education and its power to make the

masses uppity and indisciplined, challenging the traditional deference to the elite. By mid-nineteenth century, literacy and education on both sides of the Atlantic had become a key feature in establishing control in society. The new ethos of capitalism with its ideas of property and production was woven into a moral project, making the school a key institution in shaping social identity and regulating class, race/ethnicity and gender. Schooling served to create political subjects, to transform the lives of the students to the point of accepting the existing political organization of society as "natural". (Graff: 1979; Corrigan, Curtis, Lanning: 1987)

- 4 For an interesting analysis of education in Portugal itself, see Stoër: 1981.
- 5 Interviews with contemporary urban workers on their educational histories during my field work in 1985/86 included a number of people who spoke of having stopped at third class because to do fourth class was to take on assimilated status. Further work should be done to reconstruct in more detail how this classification worked, both in urban and rural settings and during different periods of colonial history.

#### *Chapter Four*

- 1 The complexity of this historical moment should not be understated. The fomenting of anti-colonial sentiment was not gratuitous, but part of a larger FRELIMO project linked to questions of race and class. the concern of FRELIMO to establish the colonial regime firmly in place as the enemy and to give substance to that critique was, at least in part, linked to a concern to legitimize the presence of those of settler origin who opted to stay to build an independent Mozambique. Given the nature of the coup, the progressive cast of the officers who made it, it was not so difficult to give substance to a Portuguese "people" equally liberated from a fascist regime. If FRELIMO signalled clearly and worked hard at the base to establish that the question was not one of black against white, it was equally clear that its project did pit the popular classes against the privileged. The clear signalling of this aspect resulted in a massive flight of the settlers, with 90% of them departing within a few years of independence. What is interesting is the comparisons between Mozambique's policies at independence and those of Zimbabwe a few years later. Popular lore in the region suggests that Samora Machel was one of those who counselled Robert Mugabe to find ways to make the settlers stay on. Whatever may have been said, Mugabe does seem acutely aware of the need for the Zimbabwean state to face two ways, walking the tightrope between legitimacy to a popular project within while avoiding signals to alarm its powerful apartheid neighbour. There is no doubt that, for South Africa, the



fate of a handful of Portuguese settlers was of far less consequence than the fate of the British settlers in Rhodesia. And indeed given the profoundly racist biases of the northern hemisphere, the fate of "kith and kin" takes on a symbolic importance well beyond the region.

- 2 The expectations actually raised by schooling perhaps deserve further scrutiny. Clearly the concept of schooling and what it brings is a social construction. Under colonialism, it had been the path to assimilated status. At the Mozambique Institute, this rapidly got translated into scholarships abroad and grooming for government positions after independence. What would be of interest, in terms of peasant conceptions of schooling as a good for their children, would be an exploration of how much this is always linked with departure from rural areas, preparation for the city. Certainly in other countries in Africa, the social construction of "schooling" sees it not as a way to transform rural or urban production processes but as a way out of the field and the factory, from work clothes and shop floor drudgery to the office with suit and pen
- 3 For a fuller discussion of these struggles, see Marshall, Judith. "Making Education Revolutionary" in John Saul (ed.) *A Difficult Road: The Transition to Socialism in Mozambique*. New York. Monthly Review Press, 1985 as well as Munslow: 1983; Isaacman and Isaacman: 1983; Egero: 1986; Egero: 1987.
- 4 Currently there are initiatives to give the concept of popular education a more precise meaning after more than a decade of rather loose usage (Jara: 1981; Arruda: 1982; Torres: 1983; Castillo and Latapi: 1983). A common reference point for those claiming to do popular education has been the writings of Paolo Freire, based on experiences in Brazil and Chile in the 1960s and 1970s and in Sao Tome, Tanzania and Guinea Bissau in the 1980s (Freire: 1970, 1972, 1974, 1983). Freire's notions of education for critical consciousness, a pedagogy of the oppressed, cultural action, the psycho-social method, the contrast between banking education and problem-solving education have all become widely known. Many and diverse practices would claim to be within the Freirian method. Recent work has tended to sharpen the definition of popular education to include a more explicit commitment to subordinated sectors, a process of "creating" knowledge rather than "transmitting" it, and the construction of new forms of people's power in a revitalized "civil society". (Brandao: 1987; Torres: 1986)
- 5 For the notion of a "pedagogy of leadership" I am indebted to Jose Luis Coraggio's insightful discussion of the educational role of the political leadership in the transition process in Nicaragua (Fagan, Deere and Coraggio: 1986). Sayer and Corrigan make the point strongly about "being good at learning" as a paramount necessity for political leadership within a process of social transformation, drawing particularly on the Chinese experience and conceptualization of this process. (Corrigan and Sayer: 1984: 140)



- 6 All subsequent translations from the documents submitted to the National Seminar on Literacy in Ribaue in April 1975 are mine.
- 7 Gordon West's studies on education in Nicaragua show striking similarities. The state schools of the old regime were characterized by little access and high failure rates along with programmes integrating poor youth into the repressive apparatus of the old Somoza regime. In dramatic contrast was the widespread popular education movement linked to Christian base communities, neighbourhood improvement associations, union efforts and networks of FSLN supporters establishing "safe" houses for guerrillas and information. West makes the point that the neighbourhood organizations established by these educational efforts were often the only "government" operating, as services were cut, factories shut, etc. "In this situation, popular education in the committees not only made the revolution possible, they suggested a possible new politics, a reformulation of education, and exemplified an alternative strategy of social development: a social structure where citizens taught each other, and provided the needed resources to develop their immediate social environment." (West: 1987)
- 8 The vibrant mass movement in Mozambique at independence seems to have slipped below the horizon of visibility in official documents. Ministry of Education accounts about the experience of literacy in Mozambique devote at best a paragraph to this period, although the accounts include estimates that more people became literate at this time than in all the subsequent national campaigns. The paper presented by a Ministry of Education official to a recent conference in Germany on literacy described the early activities in this way:

As a result of FRELIMO's drive, thousands of Mozambicans threw themselves enthusiastically into literacy and schooling. Despite the lack of adequate textbooks and without any central guidance or planning, popular initiatives encouraged the campaign and a wide section of the population participated – statistics gathered later indicate that more than 500,000 people learned to read and write at this time. The majority of these people were in urban and semi-rural areas where the lack of human and material resources was not as great. (Fonseca: 1983: 2)

The invisibility of this earlier moment is lamentable in that it could and should be an important reference point for contemporary movements of renewal within literacy such as that emanating from the training programmes in Manga (see Chapter 9).

- 9 For a fascinating study of this process of change in the secondary schools in the immediate post-independence period, see Chris Searle. *We're Building the New School! Diary of a Teacher in Mozambique*. 1981. London: Zed

Press. Here the texture of the struggle between old and new is documented with humour and wisdom in the classrooms and surrounding community of Nampula.

- 10 For a detailed analysis of the functioning of the literacy campaigns, see Agneta Lind's *O Desafio da Alfabetizacao*. Stockholm: SIDA Education division documents No. 27, December 1985. Lind worked with the DNEA from 1979-1983, during the last seven months of which she worked with Mozambican colleagues on a general evaluation of the first four literacy campaigns. The document gives a comprehensive evaluation of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th literacy campaigns run from 1980 to 1982.
- 11 My own involvement in the National Directorate of Adult Education began at this time, as part of the team involved in testing the new materials in Michafutene, with particular responsibility for the training programmes. The articulation between the team working on the new curriculum materials and other structures, both those in the training and organization departments of the DNEA and those working in the literacy sector in INDE was fraught with difficulties. The decision to include a strong component of Portuguese as a second language methodology was hotly debated, done at the last moment without opportunity for testing, and very inadequately presented in the training programmes. The courses organized by the training department functioned in a very formal context with "banking methods" prevailing and thus gave little space for the trainees to really grapple adequately with the new methods.

### Chapter Five

- 1 RENAMO, also known as Mozambique National Resistance, MNR is a surrogate force organized, trained, supplied and financed from abroad, principally from South Africa. It was initially formed by the Rhodesian secret service in 1976, but taken over and much expanded by the South African Defence Force, SADF, at Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. RENAMO terrorist actions throughout Mozambique are part of the broader low intensity warfare being waged against Mozambique, which includes occasional commando raids by SADF units directly, ongoing RENAMO activities, economic destabilization and sophisticated disinformation campaigns both within the region of southern Africa and abroad. (Fauvet: 1984; Fauvet and Gomes: 1982; Hanlon: 1984; Hanlon: 1986; Saul: 1985; Winter: 1981; Ministry of Information, Mozambique: 1985)

- 2 The metical (plural - meticaïs) was introduced to replace the escudo in 1978. It was valued officially at 42 meticaïs to US\$1.00 until February 1987 although black market rates at that time were estimated at more like 4000 meticaïs to the dollar. In January 1987, a first devaluation occurred as part of an IMF World Bank agreement. The 420 per cent devaluation in January 1987 was followed by a further 100 per cent devaluation in June of that year.
- 3 For an extremely insightful discussion of the politics of survival for the popular classes in the not dissimilar circumstances of present-day Nicaragua, see Coraggio: 1986 and Vilas: 1986. Coraggio argues that the fluidity of the working class, the tendency for it to disintegrate into an "informal" sector with multiple activities verging on the illegal must be understood in political terms. An over ready characterization of such tendencies as creating an "idle" or "parasitic" sector, may threaten the survival schemes of the very social classes at the heart of the popular project.
- 4 Fasol is an oil and soap factory which, like CIM, had the resources to mount a well-organized literacy programme. The visits made to Fasol by the DNEA staff did not include sustained contact over a period of time or the in-depth interviewing with students or teachers that would have allowed us to go beyond general observations. The broad impression, however, was one of little dynamism. The one strong moment of insight I had was a walk through the factory grounds after an incredibly boring and mechanical lesson in which the young worker who had been delegated to teach asked if I would like to see where he "worked". I acquiesced with great curiosity, since I thought he "worked" in the Fasol literacy center, where lesson preparation and teaching accounted for more than half of each day. He showed me a warehouse full of cartons of oil where his job, when he was not preparing his lessons or teaching, was to do rudimentary stock control. As far as he was concerned, that was his "job" and, I suppose, his future, whereas literacy teaching was a kind of dead end.
- 5 See earlier footnote re MNR activities in Mozambique. By mid 1985, MNR activities had increased considerably. Documents found when the main MNR base in the central region at Gorongosa was captured by the Mozambican army in September 1985 showed clearly how, at the very moment the South African government was negotiating the Nkomati Accord of "good neighbourliness" and "peace", the South African Defence Forces were making promises of continued support and stockpiling supplies to RENAMO. (Ministry of Information: 1985).
- 6 In addition to the monthly sale of CIM produce and daily bread sales, there were other items put on sale or available to CIM staff. The senior management, for example, had the right to cylinders of gas for their stoves and a monthly ration of beer, not in some clandestine fashion but publicly transported home from CIM.

## Chapter 6

- 1 Although it is a curious one, it is by no means a new form. As late as 1918, 50 000 children in England were educated in the half-time system in factory schools. (Corrigan: 1977)
- 2 This overall schema time/space/textuality draws heavily on the recent work on the political space of schooling by Philip Corrigan, Bruce Curtis, Robert Lanning in Witherspoon: 1987.
- 3 By the early 1980s, the need to rethink the organizational forms and encourage much more diversity had become commonplace in reports and debate at national level. It is only now, however, in the context of the appointment of a new director and a movement to revitalize literacy coming from the pilot project in staff training at Manga, that there seems to be some energy to tackle this problem. Having adopted a system of graded curriculum and national exams, there is strong built-in resistance to freeing literacy centres to begin and end at different times throughout the year and to advance through the programme at different rhythms determined by local conditions. (These local conditions could even include enriching the programme by adding materials based on local realities and experiences.) There is even more resistance to rethinking evaluation, encouraging local setting of exams, or indeed dispensing with exams for the first years altogether and having an exam for the primary school certificate only.

## Chapter 7

- 1 Although part of the space was officially designated as space for the OMM and OJM, the organizations for women and youth respectively, the two rooms for the OMM and OJM were virtually unused by these organizations. Neither of them was in a particularly dynamic phase. The few meetings or activities that took place while I was there made use of the general meeting room which was also used for Frelimo Party meetings, training activities, etc.
- 2 One of the debates as the textbooks were being written was the tone. Some of us argued for more problematic situations, more gray areas and a few failures rather than everybody on the high road to socialist construction in their cooperatives, communal villages and literacy classes. Once the books were in use, a number of people noted that the lesson that invariably triggered lively class participation in the first year book was the one dealing with a drunkard beating his wife and squandering his pay and generally creating problems difficult to deal with. With the daily realities of MNR brutalities,

drought and hunger, the high moral tone of the books got more and more out of tune with people's lived experiences.

The question was sharpened for me further on the trip to Latin America where we came across some amazing literacy material for women from the Dominican Republic. Tomasa came to the city as a domestic and her first crisis was finding herself on the street, fired by her madam because she was pregnant by madam's husband. Back to the countryside, another equally unjust firing and many other adventures later, Tomasa finally ends up as a union activist with a good "companheiro" at her side who not only accepts her children but also does the dishes! Apparently this "soap-opera" approach to literacy had the students begging to take the books home to read more.

- 3 There are increasing numbers of excellent studies on classroom talk that focus on the very unequal communicative rights between students and teachers. The seminal work of Basil Bernstein in *Class, Codes and Control* (Bernstein 1973, 1977) has been taken up by many others, with important empirical work in school settings making clearer the functions of language in the classroom, way of displaying knowledge and the cultural resources required to answer teachers' questions. (Hammersley: 1977; Cazden John & Hymes: 1972; Heath: 1983; Edwards: 1980)

### Chapter 8

- 1 For an interesting discussion of the tensions between democracy and centralism during this period, see John Saul. *A Difficult Road: The Transition to Socialism in Mozambique*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985.
- 2 Urdang is a journalist who has written extensively on the role of women in the liberation struggles and in post-independence societies in Africa. She is author of *Fighting Two Colonialisms: Women in Guinea-Bissau* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979) and *The Last Transition? Women and Development* in John Saul (ed.). *A Difficult Road: The Transition to Socialism in Mozambique*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985.
- 3 Clearly this is an enormously complex question for socialist transition and a point at which, in many processes, working class wage demands have been stifled as part of the larger containment of a working class project. For insightful discussions see Corrigan, Ramsay and Sayer: 1978; Fagen, Deere & Coraggio: 1986; Marshall: 1986.

*Chapter 9*

- 1 For an extremely thought-provoking reconstruction of the history of English state formation, see Corrigan and Sayer: 1985. Corrigan and Sayer make strongly the argument that the bourgeois revolution to create the institutions and agencies through which the English ruling class has organized its domination cannot be understood except as cultural revolution in which moral regulation, through state forms, plays a key role. All of this revolution has been played out in very jagged and uneven processes measured over centuries rather than in discrete events.
- 2 This series of biases is what Philip Corrigan, Harvie Ramsay and Derek Sayer refer to as the "Bolshevik paradigm" in their fascinating study of the processes of socialist construction in the Soviet Union and China. They argue that this privileging of industry over agriculture, urban over rural etc. is fundamental to the cultural forms of capitalist society as it has developed historically and that only in China, was there an attempt at certain moments to break radically with these forms and begin to construct new forms of social relations profoundly different than those that characterize capitalist culture. (Corrigan, Ramsay, Sayer: 1978)
- 3 One of the most fascinating questions for future investigation in Mozambique is the period from 1975-1977 when the Dynamizing Groups were most active as expressions of "people's power" and what caused that opening and those dynamic expressions of energy at the base to close down and formalize. The period saw an amazingly dynamic and diverse set of forms emerge to express power at the base, with ordinary people coming forward to resolve local problems using the resources at hand. It was a very ragged and uneven process, with lots of ineffective actions and some abuses of power, but there was no doubt that it generated a high level of popular participation and ownership, effectively being the state, during this period when the new FRELIMO government was taking over the reigns of government.

While the historic reconstruction is still to be done, there is evidence that at least in some areas in the field of education, the new state-sponsored programmes were experienced at the base in terms of power being taken away from the local communities. How much similar dynamics could be found around housing, health, cooperatives etc. is an open question. Equally vexing is the gap of information about the decision to phase out the Dynamizing Groups and begin to build up party cells of the newly established Marxist-Leninist party. Were there voices doubting the wisdom of this move, not out of a lack of sympathy with the politics it was meant to express so much as a fear of the potential for mystification and the distancing of people from their own political project that it represented? Ordinary people could identify with the political traditions of FRELIMO, Mondlane and Samora, and situate themselves within those traditions of struggle. It was harder to see how they

placed their lives in the context of a Marxist-Leninist party and "socialism". Clearly the Frelimo Party recognized this and put political studies on the agenda in schools, training courses, study groups in the civil service etc. But who was to teach? A mixture of western Marxists and "dialectal" experts used to teaching "dialectical materialism" in East Germany was invited to contribute. They caused ripples in high places by their opposing approaches, but for ordinary workers like those who were my colleagues in the Ministry of Education, it was simply a "confusion" to be avoided. Few felt capable of doing the political education component of literacy training courses; the initiatives to provide support texts around themes like "surplus value" or "historical materialism" resulted in memorization of these texts for tests and no illumination whatsoever about the daily realities of trying to construct socialism. For interesting studies of this period see Egero: 1986, 1987 and Saul (ed.): 1985.

- 4 For a thought-provoking response to this question, see Ivan Illich's chapter on "vernacular values" in *Shadow Work* (1981). Illich explores the moment in fifteenth century Europe when women and men were taken from their immediate worlds which included ready communicative competence in multiple local languages to a standardization of language and text. He argues that whatever power for domination was gained by Queen Isabella of Spain in authorizing the famed voyage of Christopher Columbus in 1492 pales into insignificance against the power for domination gained through another project given royal support at the time, Elio Antonio de Nibrija's first Spanish grammar.
- 5 For an illuminating discussion on the construction of "difference" in everyday life over against the "figure-in-dominance", and all of this in relation to struggles to situate "difference" as a resource for empowerment, see Philip Corrigan, "Towards a Celebration of Difference(s)" in D. Robins. *Rethinking Social Inequality*. London: Gower Press, 1982.
- 6 My own involvement included setting up the trip to Latin America with the International Council for Adult Education and its Latin American affiliate CEAAL, as well as accompanying the group in a facilitator/support role.



# Appendix 1

Nome .....	Data .....
Data di Nascimento .....	Naturalidade .....
Residência .....	
Data de Admissao.....	Categoria Ocupacional .....
Sector	
Habilitacoes	Linguas    Falada    Escrita    Lida
Pai .....	
Próprio .....	
Irmaos .....	
" .....	
" .....	
" .....	
Filhos .....	
" .....	
" .....	
" .....	
Ano	Classe    Apr/Repr    Categoria Profissional    Remuneracao    Obs
1975	
1976	
1977	
1978	
1979	
1980	
1981	
1982	
1983	
1984	
1985	

## Appendix 2

### PROBLEMATIC AREAS

#### ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

#### MATOLA INDUSTRIAL COMPANY (CIM)

#### First Discussion Document

February, 1985

This document sets out various problematic areas of literacy and adult education that have emerged throughout the first phase of research at CIM. The identification of these areas is based on the interviews and observations from May to August, 1984, May, June and December of 1985 and January of 1986. The research methodology presupposes full participation of the various people and institutions involved. To that end, I have written this discussion document, making visible some of the meanings that "school" has for the workers and some of their expectations of what it means to know how to read, write, count and speak.

#### *1. Varied expectations and meanings*

*The expectations linked to schooling, and the meanings that knowing how to speak, read, write and count have, vary considerably from one worker to another. Many aspects have something to do with the desire to have more control over daily life within the family and community, the desire to "be somebody". At first glance it could appear that this has little to do with the labour process. Indirectly, however, this new self-confidence can influence work behaviour greatly. In many cases this sense of "being somebody" may be more relevant than the abilities to read, write and count per se.*

"When I know how to read and write, I'm going to do a lot of things. I'm going to write letters to my children telling them what mama needs."

"I want to study so I can write letters, read the paper, see things in other countries. I can't get a drivers' license because I don't have 4th grade."

"I already know how to do sums and how to weigh things. Nobody is going to cheat me anymore."

"It's good to know how to read and write because when the family is far away, you can communicate by letter. Who knows, it could be that someone there is sick or has died. It's good to know how to read and write in order to keep in touch about these things."

"Now nobody can speak ill of me without my hearing it. I can ask for a glass of water on the road. I won't die of hunger."

"I want to know how to read and write so that I don't have to ask anybody's help."

"I really want to learn how to read and write. It's really necessary. When I go to a place, there could be a sign saying, 'Beware of the dog'. If I didn't know how to read, I could keep on going and get bitten."

"It is really good to study. Without it, a person wanders about without knowing anything. You enter the hospital and don't know how to get to the visitors' room. You want to catch a bus - but you don't know where it is going."

"I want to study to know where the busses go."

"I don't have the problem of being pregnant this year. I can study. I want to learn how to read well. There's a lot to read. In my community, I'm head of the block committee - but it's my assistants who read everything. I just sign."

"My problem is not knowing how to read. At times I want to take notes, but I don't know how to do it. The Party sends me to a meeting. I need to capture everything that goes on and report back - but I can't bring everything in my head."

"This year there was a problem with the exam. We arrived at the exam and found things which we had never seen before. The Natural Science book was a problem. This problem could have been the teacher's fault or our fault. A lot of us got into the habit of skipping natural science classes we didn't understand a thing."

"I want to travel. One day I want to take a trip to Tete. My brother-in-law lives there. But if I arrive by plane, when I get to the hotel, I need to know how to read and write."

"I want to study, I need to speak Portuguese for the children, to accustom them to speaking Portuguese, If not, when they go to school, they are not going to do well."

"I got 16 on the second year exam. My daughter said, 'Mama, I'm going to throw a party for you.' Somebody who has studied can go anywhere, arrive and manage well. Someone who doesn't know how to read and write is afraid."

"Before, I used to catch the bus for Malhazine when I wanted to go to Fomento. Now I know. I really know how to get about."

"I want my children to speak the national language (Portuguese). This makes the children enter school with their heads already in good shape."

"Knowing how to read makes a difference. Since I came here to Maputo, I have had to ask people the name of the bus. Now I know how to read. When I am here

at work, my boss can send something to be signed and I sign it. I can also sign a receipt. Once I got home and found a message there from my husband. It was a written message saying, "You'll find me on July 24th Avenue near the Congress Hall at 4 o'clock." Said and done! I went to meet him there. Afterwards, I felt content, This studying is good for something."

## *2. Literacy certificates, jobs and wages*

*Law 1/81 concerning adult education contains a clause which speaks of more responsibility and remuneration for the worker who studies. In practice, this happens less and less.*



"I want to do 4th grade. Maybe with it I can leave the job I am doing (handling 50 kilo sacks of grain and flour) and go onto the machines or into the office. That's how I can get out of this back breaking work."

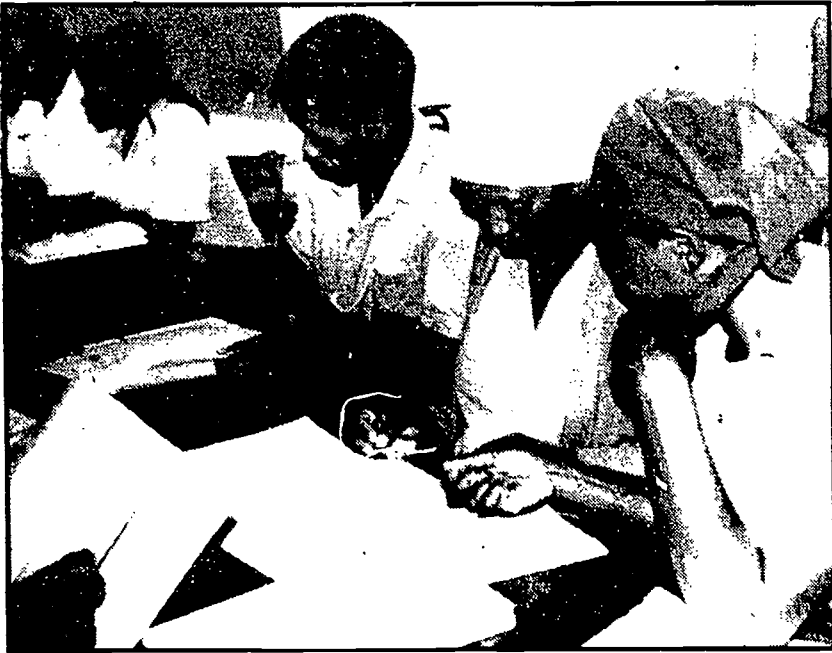
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"I can study - even up to 5th or 6th grade. But afterwards someone comes in with 8th grade who knows nothing practical to be my boss. It's not worth it."

"You earn the same, illiterate or with 4th grade. Even when you have 5th or 6th grade, you earn the same. I have friends who got to 4th grade - but it didn't change anything. Even so, it's worth it. Maybe in another firm you can earn more with 4th grade. When people are educated, they have to do well."

"I'm the type of person who wants to look for a job that pays reasonably. I have all the practical skills but when you arrive to fill out forms for work, the first thing asked for is your school certificate and not your practical skills. That's why I have to make use of the opportunity to study and do 4th grade here at CIM."



### 3. Women and schooling

*The present situation makes the worker's life a constant crisis, within a vicious circle of hunger, lack of food, inadequate housing and children without places at school. This affects the single mother in particular and makes it extremely difficult for her to have good results at school.*

"When you think a lot about your life, you can't bring yourself to study. What do we have to eat in the house when I get home from work. Here I can go to the mess and eat well. There at home we have nothing. Here in the factory I have a uniform, I have something to put on, but there at home, there is no clothing for the children."

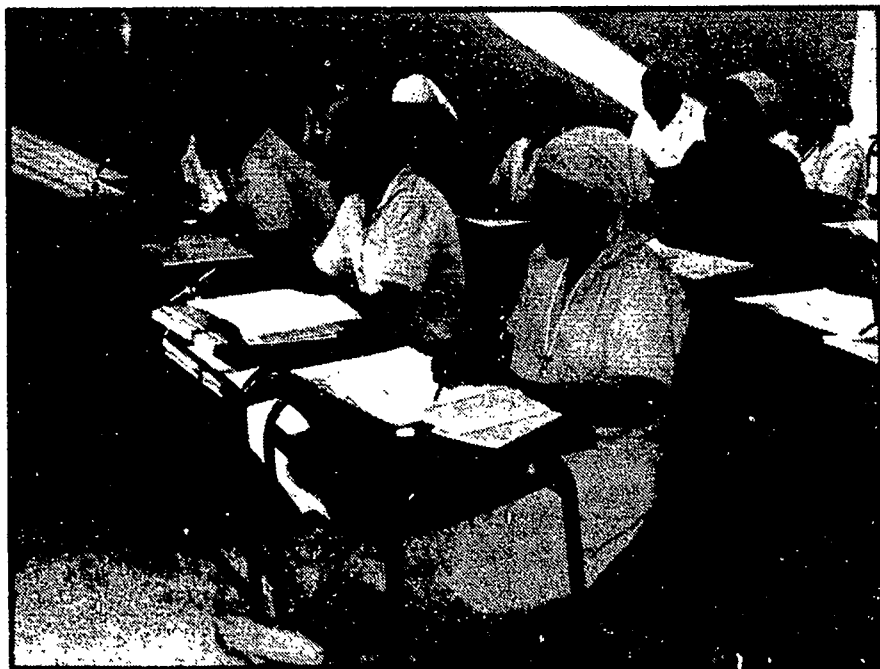


"We are already old - our time has already passed. But our children don't even have places at school. Your child is growing up. The land will pass to him - and he has to work it well. We are already past the age. My son has no place at school. He's not going to do anything. He'll learn to rob, he'll learn a lot of things out of school." - Woman of 36 talking of her 15 year old son who has passed 6th grade and has no place in 7th.

"You go to literacy classes just to be marked present. Your wits aren't there. They're at home with the problems of living. Your wits and your heart aren't there. At the end of each month, it's worse. You go out the door with your wife saying to you, 'There's nothing here in the house to eat'."

"What's the use of my studying when my son who is young is not in school. He was in 3rd grade in Gaza province. We had to flee from the bandits. They closed the school. Now they're insisting on a certificate to prove that he was in 3rd grade. Do they think that the teachers had time to issue certificates before fleeing the bandits. The schools here in Matola today are just like the black market. If it were possible for me to get 5,000 meticaïs, my son would be studying."

"When you're studying, your heart is not in it. It's with your children back home who have no food or clothing. The black market is full of capulana's (African cloth) - but how am I going to manage 6,000 meticaïs to buy one."

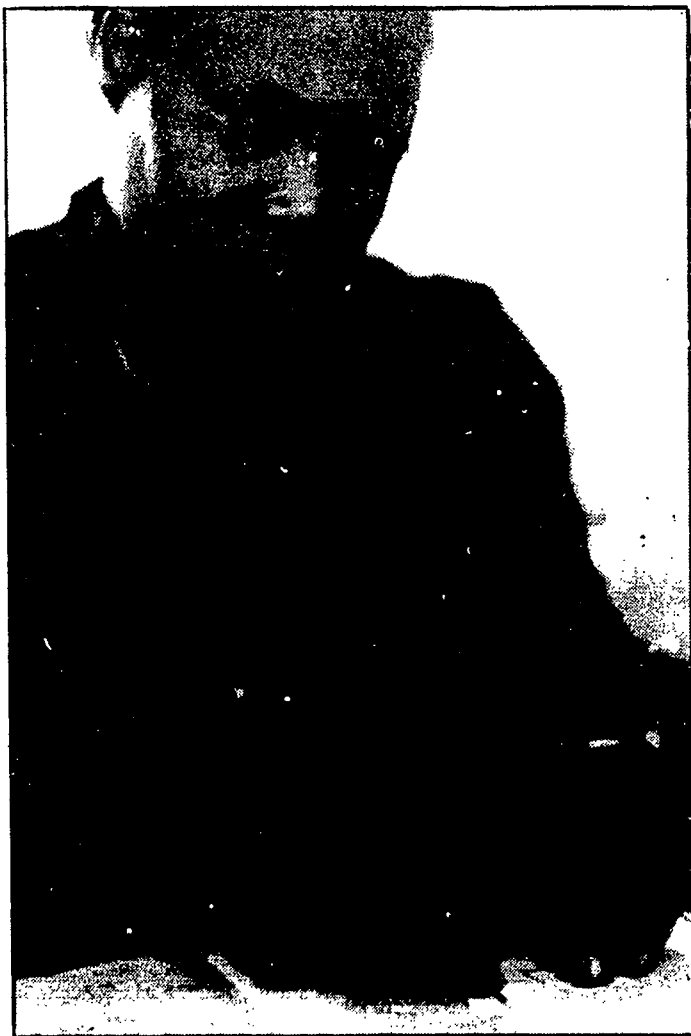


#### 4. Literacy and reproduction

*The majority of women give birth every two years. Besides their maternity leave, they have a higher rate of absenteeism because of illnesses during pregnancy, and later, sickness in their young children. If the society encourages women to*



*have children (or if men refuse to accept methods of contraception) and at the same time the society defends the right of women to study, we have to deal with the fact that it is going to take women twice as long as men. Of the 37 women interviewed, 22 lost at least one year of their studies because of pregnancy and/or maternity leave.*



"I didn't study in 1984. I had a child who spent two months in the central hospital."

"Now I'll go to literacy. Last year I couldn't cope because of the baby. Now I'm going to study. I had the inconvenience of the pregnancy last year - but this year I'm going to study."

"I didn't even do the exam. I lost a lot of classes. The baby was sick."

"I didn't even manage to do the exam. I was sick and afterwards I had maternity leave."

### 5. Women and inferiority complexes

*The women have a socialization that results in a strong complex of inferiority and a profound lack of self-confidence. They are ashamed to speak and even more timid about speaking Portuguese, with a strong conviction that they will not succeed. All of this makes it much more difficult for them to learn.*



"My heart is in pain. I want to learn. I really want to but I can't."

"When a person doesn't speak Portuguese well and says something wrong, everybody begins to laugh. That's why we're shy to speak. For example, this is what can happen when two women speak Portuguese on the bus. Other people make fun of them."

"It's good to know something. With my husband dead, if I had 5th or 9th grade, I could have a better job to feed my children."

"I have a head like a sieve. I don't understand anything. Imagine working from the 1st to the 30th of the month and not getting any payment for it. Would you continue the next month? For me, studying is like working without getting any payment."

"Men get about, travel to other places, and need to speak Portuguese, while we women stay home. We don't get about and that's why we don't speak."

"I have to go and ask the children in the community to help me write a letter to my mother. It's a shame. But I can't learn."

### 6. Literacy and production

*There are sections in the factory in which it is extremely difficult for workers to attend classes regularly because of the demands of production. In effect, the worker is registered in the class but is not there for periods of 3-4 weeks. There is no strategy for making up the lost classes and the workers feel completely left behind. They drop out. The sections most affected by this are the silos and the finished products warehouse. People in other sectors also indicate busy periods in which it is difficult to get to classes.*

"I want to start classes but my work doesn't permit it."

"Yes, I missed a lot of classes. Our section is very small and we have a lot to do; we're only six people."

"I failed. The material doesn't get into my head because I can't get to classes. It's because of work. Consecutive weeks pass by when I can't get there."

"There are organizational problems. It's not because I don't have a good head. If I could stay there for just six months, I'd have something firmly in my head. It's because I never have time to study. Three months only - that's nothing."

"A person can't go to the field for a day and then stay home for three months. You have to go and weed every day. In that way the crops will grow. In our sector we have a lot of work. When the maize mill or the wheat mill and the pasta factory need sacks, we have to guarantee them. If not, the work can't go ahead. On those days we are left without classes. But those who go get something. What can we do when we return. We are left behind. It's not a question of our bosses refusing to let us go. We ourselves see what there is to do in the sector and stay to do it with our fellow workers."

"In the sacks warehouse here in the company, we don't speak Portuguese all day long. So when we enter the classroom, it's difficult to speak. At home, we only read primary school books; there is nothing else to read."

"When the boss is absent, someone who has studied can receive any document

and know how to respond.”

“Those people in the countryside who don’t go to school don’t do anything. They just get up and go to the fields and return. It’s only the person who has studied who can come to the city and work as a domestic. Somebody who knows nothing stays in the village.”

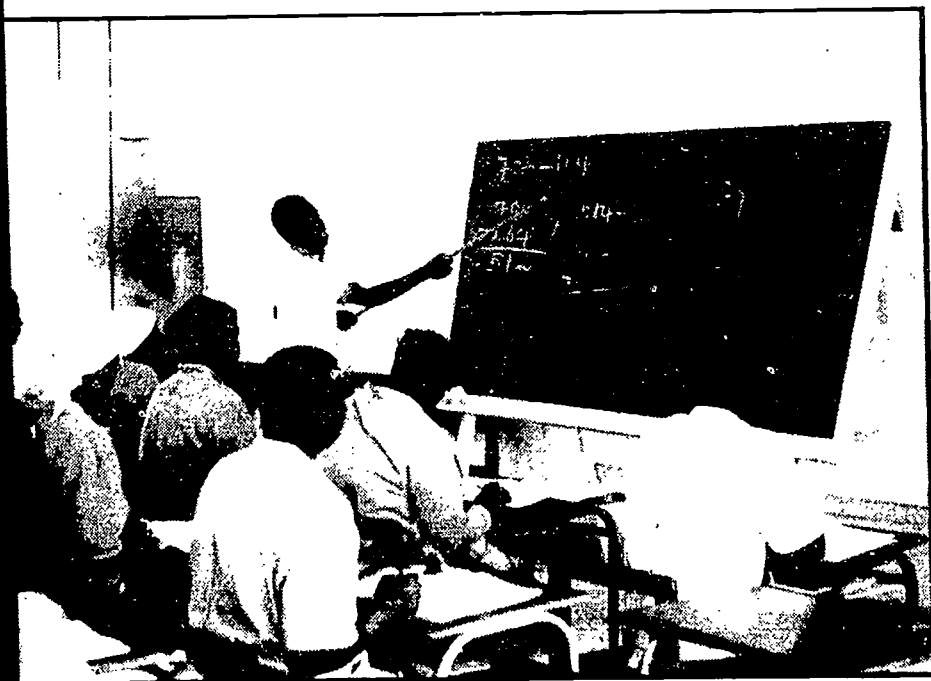
“There are a lot of people who haven’t studied but know a trade - carpenters, masons, etc. It’s better to work in a factory or go to the Transvaal (migrant labour in the mines in South Africa).”

“If I can manage to study here until the end, I can pass. This business of being absent for several days or weeks at a time is no good. When you return, you’ve forgotten what you learned before.”

### 7. Programme completion

*The programmes of study for literacy/post-literacy are normally not completed before the final exam. Given that the books arrive late and the classes have frequent interruptions, many times the adult faces an exam based on material not previously encountered.*

In 1984, the CIM school did not complete the programme of studies.



In 1985, the programme was carried out as follows: 2nd year Portuguese: 86/90 lessons. 2nd year Mathematics: 44/51 lessons. 3rd year Portuguese: 60/60 lessons (Vol. 1), 0/67 lessons (Vol. 2). 3rd year Mathematics: 43/49 lessons (Vol. 1), 0/35 lessons (Vol. 2). 3rd year Natural Science: 24/36 lessons.

*3rd year teaching materials:* In the plan for the introduction of the National Education System (Adult Education Sub-system), the new 3rd year materials should have been introduced in 1984. The books were not ready and after a period of some confusion, the centers offered the old 4th grade programme. A directive was given to introduce the new books in 1985. Here at CIM, the first volumes of Portuguese and math arrived more than two months late, however, and the second volumes were not even distributed. Nevertheless, an exam was given in November.

### 8. Language(s)

*There are a series of attitudes and practices with reference to the Portuguese language and the Mozambican languages that cause learning difficulties.*

Typical conversations in the interviews with literacy students ran as follows: Q: What languages can you speak? A: I just speak "landene" [word in Changana for dialect]. Q: But what are the names of the languages that you speak? A: I just speak Bitonga and Changana. Q: And what else? (Pause) You speak Portuguese, don't you - because that's what you and I are speaking right now. A: Oh, but I just speak it a little. And I don't speak it correctly.

The social value given to the Portuguese language and the Mozambican languages exacerbates learning difficulties. There is an acceptance of the colonial attitude in which Portuguese is a "language" while Machangana and Ndau are merely "dialects". Portuguese is valued as the language of "civilization", of "Europe", of "the gentry" while Machangana and Xitsua are disparaged as bush dialects. The over-valuing of Portuguese and the under-valuing of the African languages serves to mystify the question of speaking Portuguese. It is not treated as a means of social communication; implicitly there is an assumption being made of Portuguese as the language of a higher strata, almost inaccessible by definition. Thus the educatees enter without the slightest confidence of their capacity to speak, much less master the Portuguese language.

"Nini machamba a Manjacaze. Ningadvala a mavele, midzombula ni tin-hala." (trans. I have a farm in Manjacaze. I produce onions, tomatoes and cassava.) For many people who frequent 3rd grade and now read Portuguese easily, the idea that they can now read Changana has never crossed their minds. The process of reading the phrase above during the interview was a great discovery, creating the expectation of an immediate practical use for literacy - that now it would be possible to read letters from the village written in Mozambican languages.

In observing the various sectors at CIM, I came across the use of both

Portuguese and Changana. I have the impression that faced with the inhibitions, particularly among women, to use Portuguese, Changana is used. This creates a situation in which the adult meets up with Portuguese only in the classroom. There is a need to discover effective ways to valorize the two languages simultaneously. Certainly a directive demanding the use of Portuguese at work would be a step backwards. On the other hand, nobody learns a language they don't use!

There is a big concern to speak Portuguese "correctly". It is not viewed as a living language, with Mozambican Portuguese developing in the same way that in Brazil, "Brazilian" Portuguese is developing. Because of this, there is a fear to speak, for fear of not speaking "well".

*Testimony of a worker on power, fear and silence:* We are here working but not all of the heads make it possible for us to study. Some say no. They say, "When you go to class, we are left without enough workers. You can't go." There are others who demand that you go to classes and only afterwards, you yourself come to the conclusion that it was worth it. At the beginning it's difficult. You don't have any idea of the reason for study. Later, you begin to see why and are happy that you were forced to attend classes.

It's good to study. When you travel to another country, you can cope. Look at my own situation. I only know Manjacaze and Maputo well, I'd like to go to Boane and Namaacha. My heart yearns to go there and see how people live, what crops they grow. But I'm afraid to go. How can I ask directions, request information. When I speak Portuguese, I can ask at will, read the signs...

At times we want to say what we think, but since colonialism taught us not to speak, that's it. We were afraid to speak. We could say things that were wrong - and then everything would fall down on our heads. It was better to remain silent. That was our experience.

When I worked as a domestic, it was the same thing. The lady taught me to speak Portuguese. She explained all the tasks of the house in Portuguese. She used to return home and ask if everything was fine. I always said yes. Something could have happened, for example, I could have had the bad luck to break a cup. But I would never tell her - because you never knew how she was going to react. Days later, she would discover it. Sometimes she reacted calmly, explaining that I needed to take more care, especially when the cup was soapy. Other times she blew up. You never knew. That's why I kept silent.

And it's the same thing at the factory. You never know how the head is going to react. There could be something in the sector and you could think of alerting the head to the problem. But I keep quiet. For me, it's a problem. How to have the courage to speak up to the people in charge. The head who blows up just makes me close up more. I am afraid. The fear continues. When we are together, just us, the workers, it's okay. Nobody is going to correct me, to say that I didn't pronounce that properly. When I speak Portuguese, it's different. When there is a problem at work, I have to discover how to explain it in Portuguese. It's very

difficult. I know that the directors are interested in us, but it is difficult to find the words in Portuguese. – Grain handler, 28 years old.

In Mozambique during the time of the transitional government, people abandoned their courses at university to go out and organize literacy. Many people with 10th and 11th grade gave classes. The orientation to recruit people with 4th to 6th grade to teach emerged in the context of mass campaigns of 1978/9, taking into account the lack of human resources, especially in the rural areas and the districts. It is an orientation with little relevance for a major factory in the capital city. Since CIM is making a big investment in adult education (work time of the students and teachers, staff in the social affairs department, books, classrooms etc), it isn't worth it to jeopardize the success rate because of the limited political and academic levels of the teachers. CIM could consider the proposal to place people with more education to teach 3rd year (equivalent to 4th grade in the old system and 5th in the new system). If it is difficult to free someone with 8th or 9th grade from his or her sector for 12 hours a week, there is the possibility of dividing up the disciplines. The programme calls for 8 lessons a week divided into 4 lessons of Portuguese, 3 of Math and 1 of Natural Science, each ninety minutes long. One well-prepared worker (with a certain willingness to teach his/her colleagues) could give math while another could give the one class of natural science each week and yet a third could give mathematics.

#### *Notes of Judith Marshall May 1985:*

Today Sr. Pedro was sick. Instead of cancelling the class, there was a decision made to take advantage of the presence of Sr. N'Guiraze who was there on a visit (N'Guiraze is the head of adult education services in Cabo Delgado province). I decided to go and observe, just in order to see the same class in the hands of an experienced teacher. N'Guiraze gave a natural science lesson about the contribution of science to agriculture. I could hardly believe the level of participation. He opened up the theme for group discussion, eliciting replies and contributions from women and men alike, always picking up on what each worker said to weave it into the broader discussion. He succeeded in getting the whole group to speak in a very animated way about their experiences, comparing treated seeds and seeds from last year's harvest. There was a hot debate about how many seeds it was necessary to put in each hole and why, comparing the two types of seeds. He set them all to thinking when he asked what to do when faced with a situation of having planted five seeds, three or four of which germinate. Pull out the young plants to let only one strong plant grow - or leave them?

So my dream of literacy is realizable. Put the same group of adults who appear incapable of opening their mouths in the vertical style of a Pedro with the pedagogic style of N'Guiraze, and all begin to participate actively. It was really an exchange of life experiences for the students - among other things interesting to realize how strong their links with the countryside are, despite being part of



the urban work force. But this vision of literacy, building on the life experiences of the students, constructing the moment to introduce the "theory", based on the opening up of a reality by the students themselves... it really is possible. Everything depends on who teaches - and how.

10.

*The directives of the ministry of education on literacy point to literacy as an activity characterized by political work methods and not administrative-bureaucratic ones. The illiterate person is not simply an administrative category but a human resource within the broader project of creating a society of producers. The illiterate come from classes systematically excluded from the opportunity to study during colonial times and socialized to believe in their inability to frequent the paths of the "gentry". Because of this, literacy is conceived as an activity with profound ideological and cultural implications. The state education structures do not own literacy. It's a shared action with other state structures like agriculture and health, within which the active presence of the party is fundamental, and in which the mass organizations work towards creating viable and dynamic conditions. In theory, literacy is a conquest of the workers, and a path for their project of social transformation.*

In reality, all this elevated discourse about literacy has little to do with actual practice. Basically it is the Ministry of Education and the human resources/social affairs departments of workplaces that organize literacy. There is little presence of either the party or the mass organizations. At most, they participate in the opening and closing of the school year. The methods are more administrative than political. The staff from the human resources department contact the department heads, make proposals of who should study and control absences. Meetings, either with individual students or with the whole class are rare.

For the workers, literacy is lived as yet one more task imposed on them by their section heads. The workers are obliged to study, rather than being motivated and encouraged to do so. It may be for the well being of the workers but it is felt as an obligation imposed from above.



1983, Experimenting with more active teaching methods: Small groups forming words.  
 The words formed included not just "rat" and "river", but also "lottery" and "babe"

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# PROBLEMATIC AREAS

## ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

### MATOLA INDUSTRIAL COMPANY (CIM)

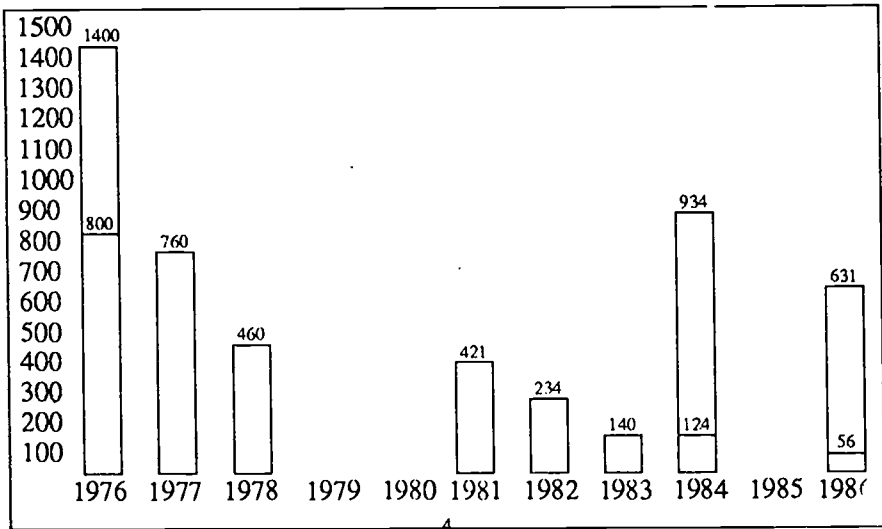
#### 2nd Discussion Document

#### Matola Industrial Company (CIM)

March 1986

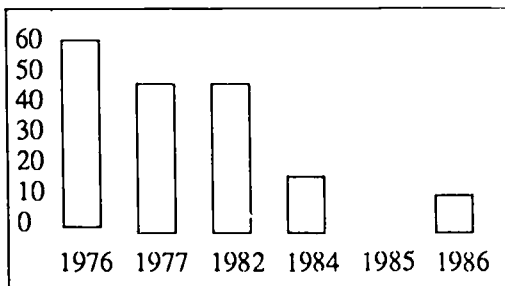
*The eradication of illiteracy in CIM is already well advanced, but it has come to a halt because of one key sector, the flour mill.*

CIM has already made great efforts to eradicate illiteracy and the number of illiterates has been reduced systematically throughout the 1976-1986 decade.



number in work force  
number illiterates in work force

The percentage of illiterates diminished from 57% in 1976 to 9% in 1986.



With reference to the national rate of illiteracy, CIM is very advanced. Recent national figures are unavailable, but from 1974 to 1980, the rate went from 9.5% to 70%. In 1978/79, 140,000 became literate, followed by 120,000 in 1980, 60,000 in 1981, 40,000 in 1982 and 43,000 in 1983. The most recent figures are unavailable.

Taking into account, however, the resources of such a major factory in the capital city, and the investment made by the enterprise in literacy over the years, it doesn't seem necessary for CIM to stay blocked with 9% of its workers still illiterate. In fact, the majority of the sections no longer have illiterates within the target group, i.e. under 45 years of age. In 1986, the illiterates within the target group were to be found in the following sectors.

Technical Office	1	Teresa Chauque	
		Silvestre Macavele	31
		Makhavone Cossa	38
		Williamo Cuna	31
Maize Mill	9	Alberto Muando	30
		Joaquim Magudane	?
		Marcos Pacule	33
		Pedro Muchongo	33
		Albazine Mucavele	?
		Jose Parruque Chitimela	?
		Luis Facudo Munde	45
		Azarias Ngonhano	?
Wheat Mill	18	Joaquim Muiambo	?
		Jossanhane Pedro	?
		Arnaldo Chissano	?
		Alberto Massinga	38
		Cufane Cossa	37
		Paulo Monjane	?
		Justino Ferramenta	32
		Manuel Chambo	42
		Mucuchuane Sambo	36
		Joao Zimba	36
		Fabiao Bengane	41
		Eugenio Zimba	?
		Basilio Cufa	?
		Alfredo Guenha	?
		Mussanguane A. Bila	?
		Francisco Mussone	31
		Armando Dique	33
		Muchuguane Edurado	36
		Rafael Chavane	44

In total, CIM has 24 illiterates outside the target group and 32 illiterates within it. The highest concentration of illiterates is in the mill, where there are 27 of the 32 in the target group or 84%. They are all shift workers who in recent years have not been included in the school because of the difficulty of establishing a timetable that does not enter into conflict with the shifts.

It seems to me that the question of literacy in the mill needs a deeper analysis. If it is really impossible within work hours as in other sectors, it must be possible to organize literacy in different ways. Option 1. Organize a kind of guided study. This means the establishment of a different form of literacy in which we give the adult the possibility of a kind of directed study. The illiterate worker receives the books and begins to work. (S)he appears at the school to receive explanations and hand in work to be marked. (S)he can set something up with other workers to get additional supports, for example with colleagues in the sector, older children, neighbours, husband or wife etc. (S)he can also set things up to work with other small groups of workers instead of working alone. If the worker is able to attend some classes according to the particular shift, this is also possible, but the weight of the work is based on individual study.

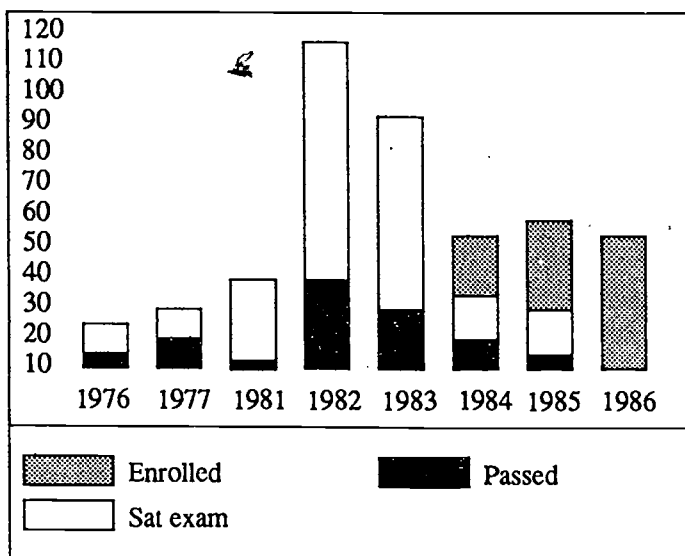
Option 2. Change the weekly timetable and organize a special calendar for shift workers. If it is not possible to organize 10 hours of classes a week, it may be possible to organize them only during the ten day periods of day shifts and extend the school year.

Option 3. Take advantage of the periods when there are shortages of raw materials or technical problems to do literacy intensively, i.e. with an accelerated course of at least two lessons a day. This option could also be coupled with one of the other options above. Any one of these options will demand a very mobilizing and flexible stance on the part of the mill and management and school staff. I would judge that any strategy to unblock the process of eradicating illiteracy in the mill will have to take multiple factors into account, not accepting the organizational and administrative aspect (shifts) as the only factor at work, without analyzing possible political factors as well (see point 2).

## 2.

*The current challenge for CIM is the organization of post-literacy, aimed at making it possible for the majority to reach 4th class (3rd year and).*

During the years since 1976, many workers have succeeded in completing 4th grade at CIM. With the available data, it appears that the workers who have completed 4th grade or 3rd year from 1981 to 1985 number 113.



In 1986, there were still 245 workers without 3rd year completed and 55 workers enrolled in the 3rd year classes. In the National Education System, primary schooling for adults is made up of first level (years 1-3) and 2nd level (years 4 and 5). The five years of study for adults are equivalent to 7 years of study for children, and it is anticipated that this level of basic primary education will be reached by more and more people, both children and adults.

Data is not available to make an exhaustive study of the education of workers at CIM. Of the 94 workers who passed 4th class between 1981 and 1984 (1981:6; 1982:41; 1983:31; 1984:16), only 31 were to be found registered in the 5th and 6th grades in 1983 and 1984. Of these, 20 failed for not having attended enough classes (i.e. were not permitted to sit the exam), four completed only 5th grade and 2 completed 5th and 6th grade.

The reasons for such massive absenteeism in a situation in which the key factors such as food and transport are guaranteed deserves closer scrutiny. Of the few interviews completed up to this moment, it seems that both organizational and political factors enter. The economic situation of the worker has become increasingly difficult, having arrived at the point where wages are simply not sufficient to guarantee the reproduction of the actual work force. It is hard to find a worker who does not have at least on other job. A great number have market gardens or raise pigs and ducks. Electricians, plumbers, mechanics or painters do work during the evenings and weekends to sustain their families. For others, there are additional jobs of tailoring, cutting wood or making homebrew, including activities on the black market. In general, it makes no difference whether you

have 4th or 7th class for carrying out these supplementary activities. Often classes rob time needed for economic activities. Even if the classes don't enter directly in conflict with carrying out these other activities, the value attributed to studying is quite low.

Questions of power struggles within the sections also enter. The statement of several workers raise fundamental questions.

"I completed 4th grade here at CIM. I requested permission to study in 1984 and did 5th class. I was working in shifts. The head forbid me to go at times. The people in charge were not studying and they didn't want to let their subordinates get ahead of them in what they knew. I know a lot of people who want to study and can't."

Many of them figure it out this way. "Since they won't let me study, for me, studying or not studying amount to the same thing. Studying amounts to staying in the same place." - 28 year old worker, now in another sector studying 7th grade.

"I did 4th grade in 1982 and 5th grade in the following year. I was in 6th grade in 1984 and 1985. I was working in shifts during this whole period and it was a hard life. When I did the shift that entered at 11 at night, I caught the bus for the three o'clock shift in order to go to classes at 5:30. When we got out of classes, I went to sleep for a bit before starting the shift at eleven.

My section did not support me very much and I had a lot of absences. In 1984, I didn't even do the exam. In 1985, a colleague went on vacation in the last month of classes and I had to work more to guarantee everything during his absence. I did the exams but I had lost the geometry part and I failed mathematics.

In our section, the majority of the heads have only 3rd class. They don't want to see a worker from the section get to do 6th grade. They do everything to stop him.

I am going to rest now. Next year, I'll start again. I want to get to at least 9th grade. I already have a son doing 11 grade at Francisco Manyanga and a daughter who is in 9th grade at Josina Machel. I am doing everything to guarantee that they continue in their studies. If I bring up a President, a minister, an ambassador, a doctor, and engineer - it's a contribution. My work will not have been in vain."

It would be naive not to recognize that there has to be a power struggle between the head with little formal schooling and without any desire to keep studying, and the veteran worker who starts adding additional schooling to his practical knowledge. Of the section heads identified at the end of 1981 to complete 4th grade in 1982, not one has successfully completed 5th grade.



3.

*The CIM school - pale imitation of a general secondary school or an education and training center of a different character.*

The great majority of secondary schools existing within production units make great efforts to organize a programme of night school like that given in the general secondary schools. Clearly, they meet difficulties, ranging from teaching materials and teachers to classrooms and viable scheduling of the classes. Those that offer 7th to 9th grade give the theoretical part of the sciences only, for lack of laboratories.

A little questioned aspect is the relevance of the contents to the real needs of the workers, who need answers for their life situations at work, in the community and at home.

The Directives of the IV Congress point to a different road for adult education, experimenting with contents more related to the needs of socio-economic development.

"Carry out pilot experiments aimed at making the contents of training more relevant to the needs for socio-economic development in each region."

It appears that the direction anticipated by the Party is the development of a diversity of adult education programmes, with distinct contents for each region and sector. For example, the contents in a school in a mining area should be different from the contents of a school of cooperative members in the countryside or workers in an urban factory complex.

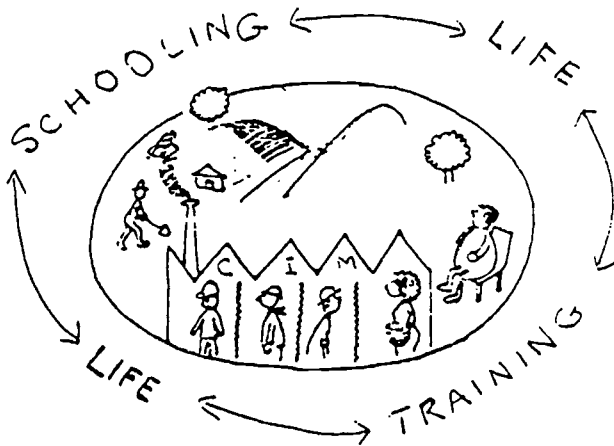
Clearly the development of more relevant contents implies a greater engagement of the students. It becomes not the mastery of determined contents just to pass from one class to the next and thus go on to the next level. The contents begin to have something to do with the knowledge and aptitudes that women and men in the workforce need for their life in the workplace, home and community.

Who is to define more relevant contents for the CIM school? In an ideal world, the school at CIM would be an area of action counting on the full participation of three different structures, namely, the Ministry of Education, the factory administration and the Party/workers' organizations. Today, it is to be noted that the Party and the trade union, women's organization and youth organization are totally distanced from literacy and adult education. The Ministry of Education limits its role to questions of texts, programmes of study, definition of the school year, evaluation and basic teacher training. The ongoing pedagogical aspects pass over to the production unit itself. Basically it is the Department of Social Services which carries out the work of the school, including mobilization, organization and pedagogical work.

It appears to me that any initiative to follow the Directives of the IV Congress and set up pilot experiments to make the contents of schooling more relevant to the educational needs of the women and men who make up the work force at CIM will come from CIM itself. It is possible to imagine a school at CIM, or perhaps better, a centre of education and training for workers simultaneously offering

programmes of general education, professional training, labour education - plus special education activities such as talks, slides shows and videos on themes like worker health and safety, housing cooperatives, childhood illnesses etc. It is also possible to imagine very diverse forms of teaching and learning in the center including programmes of study carried out through daily classees, individual directed study, accelerated courses, correspondence courses etc., with calendars and time-tables that are very flexible, all well coordinated with the rhythms of production in the factory.

What is clear is that any initiative to break the routines established and make a center of education and training in a different mould that does not simply imitate secondary schools, will come from the base, i.e., from within CIM itself.



4.

*Women workers begin their second workday at home when they leave the factory at 5 o'clock. For the great majority of women, night classes are simply not a possibility.*

Of the 15 women who completed 4th class from 1981-1984, only three continued their studies. The timetable in use until 1985 meant that students arrived home only at 10 o'clock at night four days a week. For most women, this was totally impossible.

Various women have indicated a strong interest in continuing to study but they need a more viable time-table. Some women are already registering to study in 1986, since the current time-table allows the student to reach home at 7:20. Unfortunately, the new time-table, set up in response to the security situation in Matola, was set up after classes had begun and the majority of the women did not know of it.

A possible solution in future would be a reduced daily class load and an extension of the duration of the classes. It would be quite interesting to set up a special class for women with the programme extended over a longer period and the introduction of some contents directed to the concerns of the urban working woman.



## 5.

*Comparative studies of literacy/post-literacy show that there is massive participation in literacy at the moments of social transformation in which subordinated classes believe in the possibility of a radical change in their position in society.*

Studies of the experiences in the field of literacy in many countries show that the moments of massive participation in literacy activities are periods of great social transformation, for example, the experiences of the Soviet Union in the 20's, in China during the Long March, in Cuba and Nicaragua immediately after victory. It is in these periods that the poor, the subordinated, the marginal who have not had a space to act or an opportunity to study, begin to feel their power. The spontaneous movement of literacy in Mozambique from 1975-1977 had the same characteristics. The people themselves took the initiative to create "People's Schools" and, according to estimates, 500,000 people became literate,

When these moments of euphoria and high collective energy and expectation of social change end, the massive participation also ends. When things once again enter into the routines of established hierarchies of knowledge and power, it is much more difficult to convince an adult of the value of studying.

In the actual situation in Mozambique, the concept of schooling and the way in which the society organizes its actions in relation to schooling has already changed from how it worked in colonial times and during the first years of independence. It is no longer seen as a sure path of upward mobility

Having 4th grade completed is no longer very valuable, not even 6th grade. The value of the certificate in guaranteeing a certain type of work or salary has changed radically. Even having 9th grade or 11th grade today does not guarantee a life without worries, given the grave crisis that the country is facing.

For children as well, it becomes precarious to invest in education. Children can complete one level and not have a place to continue on to the next. They can graduate from 6th grade or 9th grade and remain without work, or have a job in which the salary does not guarantee survival.

In a moment of profound crisis in the society in which schooling is not a secure path for advancement either for yourself or your children, it is legitimate to question if it is a propitious moment to make advances in literacy. If the space for action by the people exists, if they participate actively in the structures at the base that are confronting the crisis, perhaps it is also possible to organize literacy activities with contents that are relevant to and intimately related with the concrete situation. The possibility of maintaining a dynamic process of literacy or reactivating it after a lull depends always on the rhythms of the global political process.

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included interviews with women in CIM carried out in 1980. This material has been used with the author's permission.

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**T**he United Nations has declared 1990 as the International Year of Literacy. This study, which is published to coincide with the IYL, makes an important contribution to an understanding of adult literacy as an integral part of political struggle and state formation.

The study emerged out of the author's association with the Frelimo Party and the struggle of the Mozambican people over the past two decades. The study explores the relations between literacy and "people's power" in the context of Mozambique's project of socialist reconstruction. Through an ethnography of Matola Industrial Company it analyses the meanings and practices of literacy for women and men in a factory setting. Literacy is not understood simply as language skills, but as the complex interplay of language meanings and practices based as much on class, race and gender as on grammar and syntax. Literacy is also understood as integrally related to state formation.

Dr Judith Marshall, the author, is a Canadian popular educator who worked in the National Directorate of Adult Education in Mozambique from 1978 to 1984. As part of the research process she spent lengthy periods at the Matola Industrial Company and visited literacy projects in Nicaragua and Brazil together with Mozambican literacy workers. She is a founding member of the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa (TCLSAC) and is a member of the editorial collective of Southern African Report.

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